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THE LETTERS

OF THE

YOUNGER PLINY.

JUVENAL'S SATIRES,

WITH NOTES, AND AN ENGLISH PROSE TRANSLATION,

BY

JOHN DELAWARE LEWIS, M.A.

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1873.

LONDON: TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL.

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THE LETTERS

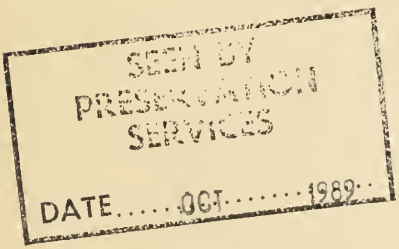
OF THE

YOUNGER PLINY,

LITERALLY TRANSLATED

BY

JOHN DELAWARE LEWIS, M.A.



524829
16.7.81

LONDON:
TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL.
1879.

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PREFACE.

VERY few words are necessary by way of preface to the following translation. It has often occurred to me as singular that, in the present age of literal renderings from the principal Greek and Latin writers, the younger Pliny should have been entirely neglected—in our own country at least; for, in Germany, three very accurate translations of the "Letters" have been given to the world by Schmid, Schäfer, and Thierfeld. In England, we have only the versions of Melmoth and Lord Orrery, both of them published in the middle of the last century, and neither of them, whatever their merits (and these are great), answering to the requirements of modern scholarship. They contain, in fact, an admirable paraphrase of the "Letters" for the benefit of the English reader, but they are in places useless, and worse than useless, to him who seeks, through the aid of a translation, to obtain an accurate knowledge of, and a light to conduct him through the difficult passages in, the original. Moreover, they contain many positive mistakes. Even these versions have been out of print till quite lately, when, I believe, an adaptation of Melmoth has been published by Mr. H. G. Bohn. So that

while every Classical author of any repute (with the sole exception, as far as I know, of Macrobius) has been of late presented to the public in an English dress, the English reader of Pliny has been obliged to resort to the shelves of a public library, or to hunt among the secondhand booksellers' stores, or to await the turning up of a chance copy at a sale.

Under these circumstances, it has appeared to me that the following translation (executed originally for my own amusement) might be of some slight use if put into print. As to the manner in which the work has been done, it is not for me to speak; but in regard to the plan which I have attempted to follow, I cannot describe it better than in the language of a distinguished Professor, with some slight verbal alterations in his phraseology to suit it to the present case:

"A translation may have two objects. It may be either intended to display the translator's felicity of diction, as when scholars produce English versions of Anacreon or Horace for the amusement of those who are well acquainted with the originals, a pursuit for which I cannot say that I have any esteem; or it may be intended to facilitate the study of the original, while it gives the translator's countrymen generally some acquaintance with a foreign author, who deserves to be known even by those who are not acquainted with his language. The latter has been the object proposed in this translation. With this view I have always guarded myself from being seduced into paraphrase by the desire of elegance. The

text of the author has been rendered throughout as closely as is consistent with intelligibility." *

I have followed Keil's text, but not servilely. When a reading differing from his has been adopted, the difference has commonly been referred to in a note. The notes are merely such as are absolutely necessary to make the English text intelligible to the reader.

The editions consulted by me have been those of Cortius and Longolius (Amsterdam, 1734), Gierig (Leipsic, 1800), Gesner and Schaefer (Leipsic, 1805), Herbst "Epistolarum Delectus" (Halle, 1839), Doering (Freyberg, 1843), and "Selected Letters of Pliny," by Prichard and Bernard (Oxford, 1872).

* Professor Chenery, Preface to the Assemblies of Al Harîri. Williams & Norgate, 1867.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

PLINY the Younger (C. Plinius Cæcilius Secundus) was born in A.D. 61 or 62, during the reign of Nero, most probably at Comum, on the Lake Larius, now Lago di Como. He was adopted by his uncle, the Elder Pliny, the author of the "Natural History," in whose company he witnessed the famous eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79. He commenced practising at the bar in his nineteenth year. Not long afterwards he was appointed Military Tribune in Syria. On his return to Rome he continued his practice at the bar, and filled various offices: those of Quæstor, Prætor, Consul, &c. In the year of his Consulship, A.D. 100, he wrote his "Panegyric" on the Emperor Trajan, the only production of his pen, besides his "Letters," which has come down to us. In A.D. 103 he was appointed Proprætor of the Province of Pontus, where he remained nearly two years. Nothing is known of the time of his death. He was twice married, but had no children.

PLINY'S LETTERS.

BOOK I.

(1.)

To Septicius.

You have frequently urged me to collect and publish such of my letters as had been written with rather more than usual care. I *have* collected them, without preserving the order of dates (since it was not a history that I was compiling), but just as each came to hand. It remains that you should have no cause to repent your advice, nor I my compliance. The result, in that case, will be that I shall hunt up such other letters as still lie neglected, and if I write any fresh ones, they shall not be withheld.

(2.)

To Arrianus.

Foreseeing that your arrival will be later than was expected, I forward you the work promised in my former letters. This production I beg that you will, as your custom is, not only read, but also correct, more especially as I do not think I have ever written anything in precisely the same spirit of emulation. For I have attempted to imitate Demosthenes, always your model, and Calvus, who has lately become mine, at least in their rhetorical turns; the *power* of such mighty men is indeed only to be attained by "the few whom the Gods favour." The subject-matter, too, lent itself to this kind of emulation

(if the word be not too presumptuous), being almost entirely in the line of vigorous expression, such as to rouse me from the lethargy of my long sloth, provided only I was capable of being roused. Yet I have not altogether avoided the "touches of colour" of Cicero, whenever a pleasant topic, not unseasonably introduced, suggested to me a slight divergence from the beaten road: since it was my aim to be spirited rather than solemn. Now don't suppose that these are reservations under which your indulgence is solicited. On the contrary, in order to add to the severity of your file, I will confess that both my friends and myself are not averse to publication, if only *you* will throw in a favourable vote on behalf of what is perhaps my folly. Indeed it is evident that something will have to be published, and I should very greatly prefer that it were this book, which is all ready (do you hear the wish of indolence?). Something, I say, must be published, and that for many reasons; principally because the books which I have already issued are said to be still in people's hands, although they have, by this time, lost the charm of novelty; unless indeed the booksellers flatter my ears. Well, let it be flattery, for what I care, so long as by this fiction they commend my studies to me.

(3.)

To Canirius Rufus.

What news of Comum, your delight and mine? What of that most charming of villas? What of those cloisters, where it is always spring time? What of that most shady of plane groves? What of the canal with its green and enamelled banks? What of the lake which underlies you and ministers to you? What of the exercising ground uniting softness with solidity? What of that bath-room which always catches the full sun on his way round? What of those dining-rooms for large and those for small company? What of the resting-chambers for day and

for night? Do these things engross you, and claim a share of you by turns? Or, as used to be the case, does your attention to your business affairs summon you to frequent excursions abroad? If they do engross you, happy and blessed you! If not, you are like a good many folks. Come now (for it is indeed time), why not hand over low and grovelling cares to others, and, for your part, in that deep and snug retreat of yours, attach yourself to study? Let *this* be your business, *this* your relaxation, this your labour, this your repose. In this, let your waking and even your sleeping time be employed. Fashion and produce something which shall be for ever your own. For the rest of your property will, after you, fall to the lot of one master after another. This, once yours, will never cease to be yours. I know what a soul, what a mind, I am exhorting. Do you only strive to put that high value on yourself, which, when you have done so, others will certainly put on you.

(4.)

To Pompeia Celerina, his Mother-in-law.

What a wealth of appointments at your houses at Ocriculum, Narnia, Carsulæ, Perusia! At Narnia a bath-room into the bargain. That one short letter of mine, of old date, suffices to tell this, and yours are no longer necessary. By Hercules, I can't call my own property my own so much as I can call yours. There is, however, this difference, that your servants receive me with greater diligence and attention than my own. The same thing will probably happen to you if you should at any time visit my house. And, by the way, I wish you would; firstly, that you may have the same full enjoyment of what is mine as I of what is yours; and in the next place, that my people may be occasionally routed up, who await *my* coming quite at their ease, and almost negligently. For habit itself causes servants to lose their

awe of easy-going masters; whereas they are roused by what is new to them, and labour to approve themselves to their masters rather by their services to others than by those paid to the masters themselves.

(5.)

To Voconius Romanus.

Have you ever seen any one more cowed and abject than Marcus Regulus, since the death of Domitian, under whom he perpetrated infamies as great as under Nero, though with more concealment? He began to fear that I was angry with him; and he was not mistaken, for I *was* angry. He had fostered the perils which threatened Rusticus Arulenus, and had rejoiced in his death to such an extent as to recite and publish a book in which he insulted Rusticus, and even called him "that ape of the Stoics." He added that he was "branded with a Vitellian scar." * You recognise the eloquence of Regulus! He mangled Herennius Senecio, and with such violence as to cause Mettius Carus to say to him, "What business have you with *my* dead? Do *I* trouble Crassus or Camerinus?"—men whom Regulus had accused under Nero. Regulus believed that I took all this to heart, and, consequently, when he recited his book, did not invite me. Moreover, he remembered in what a deadly manner he had challenged me in the Court of the Centumviri.† I was counsel for Arrionilla, the wife of Timon, at the request of Arulenus Rusticus. Regulus was on the other side. In a certain part of the cause we were relying on a decision of Mettius Modestus, a distinguished man; he was at that time exiled by Domitian. Just see what Regulus did. "I ask you," says he, "Secundus, what is your opinion of Modestus?" You observe what would have been the danger of giving a

* A wound he had received while taking the part of Vitellius.—Tacitus, Hist. iii. 80.

† A college of about one hundred judges, as the name implies, divided into Chambers or Courts. It will be found frequently mentioned in these letters.

favourable opinion, and what the disgrace of giving an unfavourable one. I cannot but think that the Gods themselves, and none else, came to my aid at that moment. "I will answer," said I, "if it is upon this point that the Judges are to decide." He returned to the charge, "I ask you, what is your opinion of Modestus?" I spoke a second time. "It used to be the custom to summon witnesses against persons on trial, not against those convicted." A third time he said, "I don't now ask what you think of Modestus, but what of the loyalty of Modestus?" "You ask," I replied, "what I think; but I apprehend that it is not lawful even to put an inquiry in reference to a matter which has been judicially decided." He was silenced. I received praise and congratulations for not having injured my reputation by an answer which might have been of advantage to me, but would have been dishonourable, and for having at the same time escaped involving myself in the snares of such an insiduous query.

So it was that, just now, with a terrified conscience, he laid hold of Cæcilius Celer, and next of Fabius Justus, with a request that they would restore him to my good graces. Not satisfied with this, he made his way to Spurinna; to him he says in a suppliant tone, most abject as he always is when he is frightened, "Pray do see Pliny at his house in the morning—oh, but very early in the morning—for I can't bear this anxiety any longer; and contrive by any means whatever to avert his anger!" I was awake when a message arrived from Spurinna: "I am coming to see you." I sent back word that I would rather go to him. We met in the Portico of Livia on our way to each other. He set forth what Regulus had charged him with, to which he added his own prayers to the same effect, though sparingly, as became a man of such excellence when pleading for one of a very opposite character. I replied, "You shall yourself judge as to the message which you think should be taken back to Regulus.

It would be wrong in me to deceive you. I am expecting Mauricus (he had not yet returned from exile), so I am not able to answer you anything either way, proposing to do what he shall decide. For in a resolution of this kind it is proper that *he* should lead, and that *I* should follow."

A few days afterwards, Regulus in person met me in the course of my attendance at the Prætor's. After pursuing me thither, he sought for a private interview. "He was afraid," he said, "that I harboured a recollection of an observation once made by him in the course of a trial before the Centumviri, when replying to Satrius Rufus and myself: 'Satrius Rufus, who does *not* try to emulate Cicero, and who *is* satisfied with the eloquence of our epoch.'" I answered that I understood now, upon his own confession, that this was said ill-naturedly, otherwise it might have been taken in a complimentary sense. "I do, indeed," said I, "try to emulate Cicero, nor am I satisfied with the eloquence of our epoch. For I look on it as the height of folly not to propose to one's self in every case the best models for imitation. But you, who remember this trial, how is it you have forgotten that in which you asked me what I thought of the loyalty of Mettius Modestus?" His extreme pallor was noticeable, though he is naturally pale, and he stammered out, "I asked the question not with the view of harming you, but Modestus." Observe the barbarity of the fellow, who does not conceal that he wished to harm an exile! He appended a most admirable reason! "He wrote," says he, "in a certain letter which was read aloud in Domitian's presence, 'Regulus, the greatest scoundrel that walks on two legs;'" which, to be sure, Modestus *had* written, with the most perfect truth.

This was about the end of our discourse; and, indeed, I did not wish to go any further, that I might preserve complete freedom of action till the arrival of Mauricus. It does not escape me that Regulus is hard to upset. He

is rich, has a party, is courted by many, and feared by still more: and fear is commonly stronger than love. Yet it may so happen that the whole fabric will be broken up and fall to ruin: for the favour of bad men is as unstable as are the men themselves. However, to keep on repeating the same thing, I am waiting for Mauricus. He is a man of solidity and judgment, informed by a large experience, and competent to take measure of the future by his knowledge of the past. Whether I make a move or remain quiet, I shall be acting with good reason, if under his guidance. This much I have written to you, because it was right that, on account of our mutual regard, you should be made acquainted not only with all my actions and words, but my plans as well.

(6.)

To Cornelius Tacitus.

Laugh you will, and laugh you may. I, the Pliny of your acquaintance, have captured three boars, and magnificent fellows too. "What, *you!*" you say. Yes, I; yet not so as entirely to deviate from my inert and sedentary ways. I sat by the nets, and handy to me were—not a hunting-spear or a lance, but my pen and my tablets! I thought over a subject and made my notes about it; so that, though my hands were empty, I might take back my note-book at any rate well filled. This mode of study is not one to be despised. It is wonderful how the mind is roused by bodily activity and movement. Moreover, the woods all around, and the solitude, and the very silence which is observed in the chase, are great incentives to reflection. Accordingly, when you go a-hunting you will do well, after my example, to take with you, not only a hamper and a flask, but tablets into the bargain. You will find by experience that Minerva as well as Diana rambles over the mountains.

(7.)

To Octavius Rufus.

Just see what a pinnacle you have placed me on, when assigning to me the same power and authority as Homer to highest and mightiest Jove—

> "Great Jove consents to half the Chief's request,
> But Heaven's eternal doom denies the rest," *

since I, too, can reply to your prayer by a like nod of assent or shake of the head. For in the same way as it is allowable for me, particularly at your request, to excuse myself from assisting the Baetici against a single individual, so, on the other hand, it would accord neither with my good faith nor with my consistency, which you so highly value, to appear against a province bound to me in times past by so many good offices, so many labours—I may even say so many dangers—undergone by me on their behalf. I will therefore preserve this mean: of two courses, one or other of which you plead for, choosing rather that which will satisfy not only your desires, but your judgment as well.† For I ought not to consider what you, my excellent friend, wish for, at the present moment, so much as what you are likely to approve of in the long-run. I hope to be at Rome about the Ides of October, and to confirm further in person to Gallus on the strength of your honour and mine what I now write. You are at liberty, however, at once to guarantee him as to my intentions.

> "Then with his sable brow he gave the nod."

Why not keep on dealing out Homeric verses to you so long as you won't suffer me to deal with some of your own? Yet I so ardently long for them, that I think they

* Hom. Il. xvi. 250.

† Octavius Rufus seems to have asked Pliny to appear for Gallus against the Baetici; or, in the event of his declining to do this, to abstain from appearing on the other side. Pliny refuses the former, but assents to the latter request.

are the only pay which could bribe me to the extent even of appearing against the Baetici. I had almost forgotten, what it would have been too bad to forget, that your excellent dates came to hand: they will now be rivals to the figs and mushrooms.

(8.)

To Saturninus.

Most opportunely has your letter reached me, in which you urge me to send you something of my composition, the very thing I had proposed to do. So you have clapped spurs to a willing horse; and you have at one and the same time deprived yourself of all excuse for declining a troublesome job, and me of all delicacy about requiring it of you. Why should I be shy in availing myself of what has been offered me; or why should you be annoyed at having brought the business upon yourself? You must not, however, expect anything in the shape of new work from an idle man. In fact, I am about to ask you again to give your attention to the speech made by me to my townsmen on the occasion of dedicating a library to their use. I remember, indeed, that you have already made some comments on it, but of a general kind. Therefore I now ask you not only to direct your attention to it as a whole, but to criticise it in detail with your usual acumen. It will be open to me, even after correction, either to publish or to suppress it. Nay, rather, it is probable that this very hesitation of mine will be brought to a resolve one way or the other by taking account of your revision; since this will either discover the work to be unworthy of publication by the numerous retouches to be made, or in the course of ascertaining this very point, will make it worthy of publication.

However, the causes of this hesitation of mine arise not so much from what I have written, as from the nature itself of the subject-matter. For it is, so to speak, a trifle too

much in the boasting and exalted line. And my modesty must be at a disadvantage—simple and subdued as my style itself may be—when I am compelled to discourse of my own largesses, as well as those of my ancestors. This is a doubtful and hazardous topic, even when the necessity of the case panders to it. Indeed, seeing that the praises of other folks are not commonly listened to with over-willing ears, how difficult it must be to prevent a speech from appearing irksome, which treats of the speaker and his family. For we are envious not only of virtue itself, but still more of its glory and publication; and such good actions as lie buried in obscurity and silence are precisely those which are the least misrepresented and carped at. For which reason I have often asked myself whether this production, whatever its worth, should be regarded as a composition for my own private use, or for that of the public as well. Its private use is suggested by the fact that many things necessary for the prosecution of an affair no longer retain the same advantage or charm when the affair in question is once completed. However, not to go further for examples, what could be more advantageous than to set forth at length, and that too in writing, the grounds of my liberality; the gains of which were, firstly, that I dwelt long in ennobling thoughts; next, that the more I pondered them, the more deeply sensible of their nobleness did I become; lastly, that I ensured myself against repentance, which so often follows on impulsive generosity. The result was a kind of *exercise* in the practice of despising money. For whereas all men are chained by nature to the guardianship of their fortunes, I, on the contrary, was released from these common fetters of avarice by my deep and long-matured love of liberality; and my munificence seemed destined to be all the more praiseworthy from the fact of my having been drawn to it by no sudden impulse, but deliberately.

Add to this, that I was not undertaking to furnish games or gladiatorial shows, but an annual fund for the

support of children born of free parents. In fact, pleasures which address themselves to the eye and the ear are so far from needing to be commended, that it would seem the part of a speaker rather to restrain than to excite them; whereas to get any one to undertake willingly the worry and toil of education—this is to be accomplished not by pay only, but further by the most artful verbal encouragements. If doctors use coaxing expressions to recommend their wholesome but unpalatable recipes, how much more did it become one, labouring for the public interests, to employ gracious language in introducing to notice a benefaction of the highest utility, but not to the same extent popular. And especially when I had to strive that a boon bestowed on parents should be approved by those also who had no children; and that the privilege accorded to a few should be patiently waited for and merited by the remainder.

As, however, on that occasion, in wishing to have the intention and effect of my gift understood, I studied the public advantage rather than personal display; so now, in publishing, I am fearful of possibly seeming to serve my own credit rather than the interests of others. Moreover, I bear in mind how much more noble-spirited it is to set the rewards of well-doing in one's conscience rather than in fame. Glory should follow, not be run after; nor, if by any chance it does not follow, is that which has merited it the less excellent. But persons who set off their benefactions in speeches are believed not to be proclaiming them because they conferred them, but to have conferred them in order to proclaim them. So, that which would have sounded magnificent from the lips of another, vanishes into nothing when the doer recounts it. Men, when they cannot destroy an action, will fall foul of its eulogy. Accordingly, if you do deeds, to be silent about, 'tis the deeds themselves will be blamed; if you do deeds to be praised, and are not silent over them, 'tis you yourself will be blamed.

As regards myself, however, there is one special consideration which embarrasses me. This particular speech was delivered by me not to the public, but to the Decurions;* not in the open-air, but in the council-chamber. I fear, then, that it will be scarcely consistent, after shunning the applause and acclamations of the public in my spoken discourse, to court *now* the same manifestations in a published one: after interposing the entrance and the walls of the council-chamber between myself and that very populace in whose interests I was acting, so as not to incur any appearance of currying their favour, *now*, to be running after those who have nothing to gain from my liberality except the example, and, as it were, parading it in their faces.† You are informed of the causes of my hesitation. However, I shall follow your opinion, since your authority will be to me a sufficient reason.

(9.)

To Minucius Fundanus.

It is astonishing how good an account can be given, or seem to be given, of each separate day spent in Rome, yet that this is not the case with regard to a number of days taken in conjunction. If you were to ask any one, "What have you been doing to-day?" he would reply, "I have attended at the ceremony of a youth's coming of age. I have helped to celebrate a betrothal or a wedding. One has invited me to the signing of his will, another to attend a trial on his behalf, another to a consultation." These things seem indispensable at the time when they are done, but when you come to reflect that you have been doing them day after day, they strike you as mere frivolities; and much more is this the case when one has retired into the country. For, then, the recollection steals over you, "How many days have I wasted, and in what dreary

* The members of a local senate, something like our town-councillors.

† I read *obvia ostentatione*, not (with Keil) *adsentatione*.

pursuits!" This is what happens to me as soon as I am in my house at Laurentum, and am reading or writing, or even merely looking after my bodily health, that stay on which the mind reposes. I hear nothing, I say nothing, which one need be ashamed of hearing or saying. No one about me gossips ill-naturedly of any one else, and I for my part censure no one, except myself, however, when my writings are not up to the mark. I am troubled by no hopes and no fears, disquieted by no rumours: I converse with myself only and with my books. What a true and genuine life, what a sweet and honest repose, one might almost say, more attractive than occupation of any kind. Oh, sea and shore, veritable secret haunt of the Muses, how many thoughts do you suggest to the imagination and dictate to the pen! In the same way do you too, my friend, at the first opportunity, turn your back upon all that bustle, and idle hurry-scurry, and utterly inane drudgery, and give yourself up to study or even to repose. It is better—as friend Atilius says, with as much wisdom as wit—to have nothing to do than to do nothing.

(10.)

To Attius Clemens.

If ever the polite arts flourished in our city, they are particularly flourishing at the present time. Of this there are many distinguished illustrations: one would suffice—Euphrates the philosopher. I knew him intimately, in his domestic interior, in Syria, when in early youth I served in the army there, and laboured to gain his affection, though to be sure there was no need of labouring, for he is forthcoming and accessible and full of the courtesy which he preaches. And I only pray that *I* may have fulfilled the hopes which he then conceived of me in the same degree as *he* has added to his own virtues. Or perhaps it is that I admire them more now in consequence of appreciating them better; though to

be sure I do not even now sufficiently appreciate them. For as it is only an artist that can judge of a painter, engraver, or statuary, so a sage can be thoroughly understood only by a sage. As far, however, as is given me to see, there are many qualities in Euphrates which shine forth so conspicuously as to attract and affect even persons of moderate learning. He disputes with subtlety, solidity, and elegance: often he goes so far as to reproduce the well-known sublimity and copiousness of Plato. His language is rich and varied, and particularly agreeable, so as to lead on and impel those even who fight against it. Add to this that he is tall of stature, of noble countenance, with flowing locks and a huge white beard: all of which may be thought mere accidents of no account, yet they add greatly to the veneration which he inspires. There is no squalor in his attire, nothing of moroseness about him, but much grave earnestness: his approach is productive of respect, not awe. His sanctity of life is remarkable, and no less so is his affability. He inveighs against vices, not individuals; sinners he reclaims rather than chides. You follow his admonitions attentively, hanging on his lips, and longing to be convinced even after he has succeeded in convincing you.

Further, he has three children, two of them sons, whom he has brought up with the utmost care. His father-in-law is Pompeius Julianus, a man of great mark, as well in the general course of his life, as above all in this one particular: himself a magnate of his province, with a choice of many brilliant matches, he chose for his son-in-law one who was a magnate not in rank but in wisdom. Yet why speak further of a man whose company I am not able to enjoy? Is it to torment myself the more for not being able to do so? For I am engrossed in the discharge of an office as highly irksome as it is important. I sit on the bench, countersign memorials, make up accounts, and write a vast number of most unliterary letters.* I am

* He was at this time Prefect of the Treasury.

in the habit of complaining to Euphrates occasionally—for how seldom do I get the chance of doing even this !—about my employment. He consoles me, and goes so far as to assert that it is a function, and indeed the noblest function of philosophy, to conduct public affairs, to try, to judge, to exhibit and exercise justice, and to put in practice what these very philosophers teach. Yet one thing alone he cannot convince me of: that it is better to be thus engaged, than to consume whole days in listening to him and learning from him. So all the more do I exhort you, who have the spare time, directly you come to town (and you ought to come sooner on this account), to put yourself into his hands for the purpose of being perfected and finished. I do not, as so many do, envy others the boons lacking to myself, but, on the contrary, experience a certain sense of pleasure on observing that the advantages which are denied to me abound to the benefit of my friends.

(11.)

To Fabius Justus.

'Tis now some time since you have sent me any letters. "There is nothing," say you, "for me to write about." Well, then, write *this*, that there is nothing for you to write about: or merely that with which your former letters used to begin. "If you are well, all's right. I am well." That will do for me, for it is of the highest interest. Yout hink me joking? I ask in all seriousness. Let me know what you are doing: a matter I cannot remain ignorant about without the gravest anxiety.

(12.)

To Calestrius Tiro.

I have suffered a very heavy loss, if parting with so great a man can be called a loss.* Cornelius Rufus is

* Pliny's meaning here is uncertain. Ernesti explains the words by a reference to Book ii. Epistle 1: *Si tamen fas est aut flere aut omnino*

dead, and by his own hand too, which intensifies my grief. No kind of death is so lamentable as that which seems to be neither natural nor necessary. For, however it may be that, in the case of such as perish by disease, there is a strong consolation to be derived from a mere sense of the unavoidable: in regard to those who are carried off by a voluntary death, there is an incurable grief in the thought that they might have lived much longer. Cornelius indeed was driven to this resolve by the force of reason, which to philosophers stands in the place of necessity, though he had many incentives to life, the best of consciences, the best of reputations, the highest influence, not to speak of a daughter, a wife, a grandson, sisters, and, in addition to so many pledges, a number of true friends. But he had been tormented by such a protracted malady, that all these great enhancements of life were outweighed by the considerations which made for death.

In his three-and-thirtieth year, as he used to tell me himself, he was seized with gout in the feet. In his case it was hereditary, for diseases, like other things, are often transmitted in a kind of succession. As long as he was in the vigour of his age, he conquered it and kept it under by abstemiousness and self-restraint; in the end, when it increased upon him with his years, he bore up against it by strength of will, though tortured and tormented in the most cruel and incredible fashion. For the pain was by this time no longer confined to his feet, as before, but permeated all his limbs.

I called upon him in the days of Domitian, when he was lying at his house near town. His slaves retired from his bedroom, for so he would have it, whenever one of his intimate friends came in; even his wife, though capable of being intrusted with any secret, used to with-

mortem vocare qua tanti viri mortalitas magis finita quam vita est. the *mortality* rather than the *life* of such an illustrious man?"
"Can that be called death which ends

draw. After casting a glance around, "Why," said he, "do you suppose that I bear these dreadful pains so long? In order that I may survive that *brigand*,* if only for one day!" If you could have given him a body to match his soul, he would have carried into execution what he had in his mind.† However, Heaven granted the prayer, and, feeling that he could now die at peace and a free man, he severed the many but slighter ties which bound him to life. The disease had increased upon him, though he endeavoured to mitigate it by abstinence. His determination rescued him from its persistency. Two, three, four days had already passed. All the time he refused food. His wife, Hispulla, despatched to me a common friend, C. Geminius, with the melancholy news that Corellius had determined to die, and was not to be prevailed upon by her own or her daughter's prayers; that I was the only person remaining who could recall him to life. I flew to him, and had almost reached his door when Julius Atticus, sent by the same Hispulla, announced to me that by this time not even I could have any effect on him, with such obstinacy had he gone on hardening in his purpose. Indeed, to the physician tendering him food he had said "*Κέκρικα*," ‡ a word which left in my mind as much regret as admiration. I think what a friend, what a man I have lost. To be sure, he had completed his sixty-seventh year, an age sufficiently advanced even for the strongest. I know it. He has escaped from an unceasing malady. I know it. He has died, leaving a surviving family, and his country, which was dearer to him than all his belongings, in a prosperous condition. I know this too. Nevertheless, I for my part lament his death just as though it were that of a man young and full of vigour. I lament it, moreover—think me weak if you like—on my own account. For I have lost a witness to my

* Domitian.

† He would have killed the tyrant. This must be the meaning of *fecisset quod optabat*; not, as some render, "he would have done what he wished to do," *i.e.*, he would have survived Domitian. For he *did* survive him.

‡ "I have made my decision!"

life,* a guide and master. To sum up, I will repeat what in the freshness of my grief I said to my friend Calvisius, "I fear I may live more carelessly for the future." So I pray you administer some consolation to me—not of this kind, "He was an old man. He was in feeble health;" for all this I know; but something new, something weighty, such as I have never heard and never read. For what I *have* heard and read occurs to me naturally, but is overmastered by the greatness of my sorrow.

(13.)

To Socius Senecio.

The present year has brought us a great supply of poets. During the whole month of April there was hardly a day when some one did not recite. I am glad that learning flourishes, that men of genius come forward and show themselves, albeit the audiences are indolent in their attendance. Many remain sitting out in the public places, wasting the time when they ought to be listening in gossip. They even send to inquire, at intervals, whether the reader has yet gone in, whether he has got through his prefatory remarks, whether he has turned over the greater part of his manuscript. Then at last they come in, even then in a lazy, loitering way, and after all they do not stay it out, but go away before the end, some slily and furtively, others quite openly and without disguise. But, by Hercules, in the time of our fathers, they relate how Claudius Cæsar, when walking in his palace, heard a clamour and inquired the cause of it, and on being told that it was Nonianus who was reading, presented himself suddenly and unexpectedly to the reader. Now-a-days, the idlest people, though they have had a long invitation and frequent reminders, either do not come at all, or, if they do come, complain that they have lost a day, just because they have *not* lost one. All the more then should

* As to this expression, cf. Bk. iv. Letter 17.

we praise and approve those who are not discouraged in their zeal for writing and recitation by this laziness, or else superciliousness, of their audiences. I for my part have failed scarcely any one. Most of them to be sure were friends. Indeed there is hardly a man who loves literature but what he loves me too. On this account I have spent a longer time in town than I had intended. I can now at last return to my country retreat and write something which shall *not* be recited, that I may not seem to have been the creditor, instead of the hearer, of those at whose recitations I was present. For, as in all other matters, so in this attendance of hearer, the favour ceases to be a favour, if a return be asked for.

(14.)

To Junius Mauricus.

You ask me to look out for a husband for your brother's daughter, and you are right in laying this charge on me in preference to any one else. For you know how greatly I revered and loved that eminent man, how my youth was fostered by his counsels, by what commendations too he brought it about that I should seem worthy of being commended. You could not give me a more important or more agreeable commission, nor is there anything which I could with more propriety undertake, than this selection of a young man to be the parent of Arulenus Rusticus's grandchildren.

Yet I should have had to look for him for a long time if he had not been at hand and provided for you, so to speak, in the person of Minicius Acilianus, who is most closely attached to me, as one young man to another (he being my junior by a few years only), and at the same time reveres me as an elder. For it is his desire to be formed and instructed by me in the same way that I used to be by you two. His home is in Brixia, in that part of our country which still retains and preserves much of the

ancient modesty, sobriety, and even rustic simplicity. His father is Minicius Macrinus, a leading man of the equestrian order only, because he aspired to nothing higher; for having been nominated to Prætorian rank by the Emperor Vespasian, he persistently chose honourable retirement rather than the pretence, or, if you please, the dignity which belongs to us. His grandmother, on the maternal side, is Serrana Procula, from the free town of Padua. You are acquainted with the manners of the place. However, Serrana is a model of decorum even to the Paduans. He is, moreover, blessed with a maternal uncle, P. Acilius, a man of authority, judgment, and integrity almost unique. In short, there is nothing in the whole family which will not be as agreeable to you as though it were in your own.

Acilianus himself is full of energy and activity, yet extremely modest withal. He has discharged in succession, and with the highest distinction, the offices of Quæstor, Tribune, and Prætor, so that he has already relieved you of all necessity of canvassing for him. His countenance is that of a gentleman, the blood coming readily to his cheeks, which are not seldom suffused with a blush; his whole person is marked by a well-bred elegance and a kind of senatorial dignity. Now these are points which I think by no means to be neglected, for they form, as it were, a tribute due to the chastity of young brides. I don't know whether to add that his father is possessed of ample means. For when I picture to myself *you*, for whom I am seeking a son-in-law, I am disposed to be silent on the subject of means. Yet, when I consider the prevailing manners, and indeed the laws of the state (which enact as of the first importance that men's fortunes shall be examined into), it seems to me that here too is a thing not to be passed over. And, to be sure, to any one who thinks of posterity, and that a numerous one, this also must be a subject of calculation in the assortment of marriages.

You may perhaps think that I have yielded to partiality, and have put all this higher than the facts comport; but I pledge my word you will find everything far beyond my representations. It is true that I feel for the young man the ardent regard which he merits; but not to over-weight him with praises is in itself the act of a friend.

(15.)

To Septicius Clarus.

Harkee, friend, you engage yourself to dine with me, and never put in an appearance. We pronounce sentence on you! You shall reimburse to the last farthing our expenses—no trifle, let me tell you. There was a lettuce apiece provided, three snails per man, ditto two eggs, sweet cake with mead and snow (this last you will have to reckon, and among the first items too, since it melted in the dish), olives, beet-root, gourds, onions, and a thousand like delicacies. You would have heard a comedian, or a reader, or a lute-player, or, such is my liberality, all three! But you, at some one or other's, have preferred oysters, tit-bits of pork, sea-urchins, dancing girls from Gades. You shall suffer for it; I won't say how. You have acted cruelly. You have punished, if not yourself, at any rate me; yes, and on second thoughts, yourself too. How we should have jested, laughed, improved our wits! You will dine more sumptuously at many houses, nowhere with more gaiety, with more absence of pretence, with greater unreserve, than at mine. In short, make the experiment; and, after that, if you don't decline other folk's invitations for mine, I give you leave to decline mine for ever.

(16.)

To Erucius.

I had a great regard for Pompeius Saturninus—I mean our friend of that name—and used to laud his genius even

before becoming acquainted with its versatility, flexibility, and many-sidedness. Now, however, he has taken a complete hold of me—he captivates and enthrals me. I have heard him pleading in court with spirit and fire, and with no less polish and elegance, whether in the delivery of prepared or impromptu speeches. You are presented with numerous and suitable aphorisms, an imposing and harmonious arrangement of matter, words that ring on the ear with the stamp of antiquity. All this is wonderfully pleasing as it flows on in a kind of impetuous stream; and the same things please, too, if you return to them. You will feel as I do when you read his speeches, and will readily compare them with those of any of the ancients, who are the objects of his emulation. In his histories, however, he will gratify you still more, whether by his conciseness, lucidity, or graceful style, or else by the very splendour and sublimity of his diction. For in his historical speeches, he is the same as in his spoken orations, only more compressed, more concise, more terse. Besides, he writes verses like those of Catullus and Calvus —really and truly like those of Catullus and Calvus. How full of sprightliness they are, of sweetness, of pungency, of love! To be sure he intersperses (designedly, however) these smooth and delicate verses of his with some of a rather harsher kind; but this, too, is after the fashion of Catullus and Calvus.

He read me recently some letters, saying they were his wife's. I fancied myself listening to Plautus or Terence in prose. Whether they are his wife's, as he affirms, or his own, as he denies them to be, he is entitled to equal credit; in the one case for producing such compositions, in the other case, for turning his wife—a mere girl when he married her—into such a learned and finished woman.

I make him my companion, then, through the whole day: I read him before writing and after writing, and even when unbending my mind—always the same yet

always new. And I exhort and admonish you to do the same. Nor is it just that the fact of his being alive should stand in the way of his works. Can it be that, if he had flourished among those whom we have never beheld, we should be hunting up not only his books but statuettes of him; and yet that this same man, because he is now present among us, should find his glory and credit enfeebled through our having, so to speak, too much of him? But surely it would be wrong and ill-natured not to admire a man in all respects worthy of admiration, just because it is our good fortune to see, to talk with, to hear, to embrace him, when besides merely praising him we can love him as well.*

(17.)

To Cornelius Titianus.

Loyalty and duty are still a care to men; there are still those who play the part of friends even to the dead. Titinius Capito has obtained from our Emperor an authority to put up in the Forum a statue of L. Silanus. 'Tis a noble thing and deserving of all praise to make such a use of the prince's friendship, to try what one's interest is worth by seeking honours for others than one's self. It is quite in Capito's way to pay respect to great men. It is wonderful how reverentially and lovingly—in his own house, where he is at liberty to do so†—he treats the images of a Brutus, a Cassius, a Cato. The same individual has set forth the lives of all the most distinguished men in admirable poetry. You may be sure that he who so loves the virtues of others is himself replete with numerous virtues. So the honour which was his due has been paid to L. Silanus, whose immortality Capito has provided for, while at the same time providing for his

* Which would not be the case if he were dead.

† Even under Trajan it would not have been allowable to erect statues in public to anti-imperialists.

own. For it is no greater honour and distinction to enjoy a statue in the Forum of the Roman people than it is to place one there.

(18.)

To Suetonius Tranquillus.

You write that you have been terrified by a dream, and are afraid of experiencing some ill-success in your law-suit; so you beg me to apply for an adjournment, and to get off for a few days—at any rate for the first day. It is a difficult matter, but I will try what can be done. "For dreams descend from Jove!" It is of some consequence, however, whether you are in the habit of dreaming what comes true or the reverse. To me, as I think over a dream of mine, this subject of your fear seems to portend an excellent issue to your suit.

I had undertaken the cause of Junius Pastor, when, in my sleep, my mother-in-law appeared to me, in a suppliant posture at my feet, beseeching me not to plead. Now I was about to appear, while yet a stripling, before the four Centumviral courts,* against men of the highest influence in the state, and, what is more, against friends of Cæsar—circumstances each of which singly was enough to frighten me out of my wits after such a sad dream. I *did*, however, plead, reckoning, in the well-known words, that

"The best of omens is my country's cause."

For here my honour seemed to me to stand in the place of my country, and, if possible, to be dearer to me than my country.† The issue was favourable, and, more than that, it was that very speech which opened for me the ears of men and the gates of fame.

In like manner, consider whether you also, with this

* See Bk. vi. Letter 33, note.

† Literally, "My honour seemed to me to be my country (to stand in the place of πάτρη, in the line of Homer), and anything, if there could be anything, which might be dearer to me than my country."

example before you, may not give to that dream of yours a favourable turn. Or, if you think it safer to follow the cautious man's maxim, "What you are in doubt about, don't do," why then reply to that effect. I will find out some device, and will so plead for you, that *you* shall be able to plead when you choose. To be sure your case is not the same as mine. A trial before the Centumviri cannot be put off for any reason: one such as yours—though with difficulty—still can be put off.

(19.)

To Romatius Firmus.

You are my townsman and my schoolfellow, and have been my associate from the outset of life. Your father was on terms of intimacy with my mother and my uncle,* and with me too as far as the difference between our ages permitted. These are grave and weighty reasons why I should undertake to add to your position. Now the fact of your being a Decurion in our parts sufficiently indicates that you possess a fortune of a hundred thousand sesterces.† In order, then, that we may have the advantage of seeing you not merely a Decurion but also a Roman knight, I offer you three hundred thousand sesterces to make up the knightly fortune. The length of our friendship is a guarantee that *you* will not forget this service. Nor will *I* so much as make this suggestion to you—one which it would be my duty to make, if I did not know you would so act of your own accord—that you should enjoy the dignity conferred on you by me, with all possible discretion, as being conferred *by me*. For all the more jealously should an honour be guarded when at the same time the kindly act of a friend has to be preserved from being disgraced.

* *Avunculus*, his maternal uncle; the elder Pliny.

† About £800. For the *Decurions*, see Letter 8, note.

(20.)

To Cornelius Tacitus.

I have frequent discussions with a certain learned and experienced person, who, in the matter of pleading causes, likes nothing so much as brevity. And I confess that this should be kept to, if the cause permits. Otherwise, it is a dereliction of one's duty to pass over things which ought to be said: it is a dereliction even to touch cursorily and briefly on points which ought to be inculcated, imprinted, repeated. For to most kinds of arguments a certain strength and weight are added by dwelling on them at greater length, and, as steel into the body, so an oration is driven into the mind, not more by the blow than by the slow lengthening of it.

Hereupon my friend plies me with authorities, and holds out to me the orations of Lysias, among those in Greek, and, of our Roman ones, those of the Gracchi and Cato, most of whose speeches are certainly concise and short. To Lysias I oppose Demosthenes, Æschines, Hyperides, and many others: to the Gracchi and Cato, Pollio, Cæsar, Cælius, Marcus Tullius* especially, the best of whose speeches is said to be the one which is the longest. And, by Hercules, like other good things, so a good book is the better for being longer. You see how statues, images, paintings, in fine, the forms of men and of many animals, of trees even, if only they be beautiful, are enhanced by nothing so much as by their size. The same thing is true of orations; and even books themselves receive a kind of additional authority and beauty from their bulk.

These arguments, and many others which are usually urged by me to the same effect, my friend—who is hard to hold, and slips from one in discussion†—manages to evade by contending that these very men whose orations I rely on did not speak at such length as they published. I am of the opposite opinion. Proofs are to be found in

* Cicero. † A metaphor taken from the arena.

a number of orations by a number of orators, as well as those of Cicero for Murena and for Varenus, in which a short and bare formal notification, so to speak, of certain charges is intimated under their heads only; from which it is plain that he must have spoken a great deal which he left out when publishing. The same Cicero tells us that on behalf of Cluentius he argued the whole cause from beginning to end, without assistance, in accordance with the old rule;* also that he pleaded four days for C. Cornelius. We cannot doubt, then, that what was spoken by him with greater diffuseness, as must necessarily have been the case in a discourse of several days, was afterwards cut down, pruned, and compressed into a single volume, a large one indeed, still a single one.

However, it will be said that a good *speech* is one thing and a good *oration* is another.† I know that many think so. But I, though perhaps mistaken, am persuaded that it is possible for a speech to be a good one which will not make a good published oration, while it is impossible that a good oration should not make a good speech. For the oration is the model, and, so to speak, archetype of the speech. Hence, in all the best of them, we find a thousand extemporaneous turns, even in those which we know to have been published only; as, for instance, that against Verres. "But the artist, whatever was his name? You are quite right in your reminder. It was, as they said, Polycletus." It follows that the most perfect speech is that which is most closely moulded in the likeness of an oration: if, that is, the just and proper time be accorded it. Of course, if this be refused, the judge will be greatly to blame, the speaker not at all. This opinion of mine is confirmed by the laws which allow the amplest time and inculcate on speakers not brevity but copiousness, that is to say, diligence, which brevity must fail to exhibit, save in causes of the narrowest dimensions.

* Which allowed unlimited time.

† *Actio*, a speech intended to affect the hearers only. *Oratio*, an oration prepared for publication.

I will add what experience, the best of masters, has taught me. I have often pleaded in court, often sat as judge, and often been called in as an assessor. One man is moved by one thing, and another by another, and very often small matters lead to the greatest consequences. The powers of judging and dispositions of men vary. Hence those who have listened together to the same cause often arrive at opposite conclusions, and, if sometimes at the same conclusion, yet from opposite mental processes. Besides, every one is inclined to favour his own ingenuity, and when he hears from another what had previously occurred to himself, he embraces it as most convincing. All, then, should have something addressed to them which they can take in and recognise as their own. Regulus once said to me, when we were engaged together, "You think you must follow up every point in the suit. I at once see the 'throat'* of the case and grasp *that*." He grasps, to be sure, the part he has selected, but in the selection he often makes a mistake. So I answered that it was possible the knee or the ankle might be where he thought the throat was. "But I," I continued, "who cannot make sure of the 'throat,' handle every part and try every part: in short, leave no stone unturned." And just as in agriculture I attend to the cultivation, not of my vineyards alone, but my plantations as well, nor of these alone but of my fields also, and as in these same fields I sow not spelt or wheat only, but barley, beans, and the other plants, so in a speech I scatter far and wide many seeds, as it were, in order to reap whatever happens to come up. For indeed the tempers of the judges are not less obscure, uncertain, and deceptive than those of the seasons and the soils. Yet I do not forget that that great orator Pericles was lauded in these terms by Eupolis the writer of comedies :—

> "Swift-flowing were his words, and yet withal
> Softest persuasion sat upon his lips,

* A common metaphor of Roman pleaders. As we say, "the vital part."

Such was his charm ; and he alone of all
Who spoke could, speaking, leave his sting behind."

But Pericles himself could not have obtained this "persuasiveness" and this "power of charming" by mere brevity or rapidity, or both (for they are very different things), without the highest natural genius for oratory. For to delight and persuade demands copiousness of speech and time for speaking. Moreover, he alone is able to "leave a sting" in the minds of his hearers who not only pricks with it, but fixes it in. Add what another comic writer says of the same Pericles—

"He lightened, thundered, and confounded Greece."

Now it is not a maimed and stunted oration, but one that is full, majestic, elevated, which can thunder, lighten, and, in short, raise a universal perturbation and confusion.

"But the mean is the best." Who denies it? Yet no less does he fail to preserve the mean who speaks short of what is due than he who exceeds it; no less the speaker of too restricted than the one of too enlarged a compass. Accordingly you often hear not only the observation, "Out of all bounds and excessive!" but also this one, "Jejune and feeble!" The one is said to have gone beyond his subject-matter, the other not to have completed it. Each is equally at fault; but the former sins through feebleness, the latter through excess of vigour, which is the vice not perhaps of a more cultivated but assuredly of a more powerful nature. Yet, in saying this, I do not approve of that "unbridled talker" * in Homer, but rather of him

"Who, when he speaks, what elocution flows,
Soft as the fleeces of the wintry snows." †

Not but what another character is greatly to my taste—

"With words succinct yet clear." ‡

If, however, the choice were given me, I should prefer

* Thersites. † Ulysses. ‡ Menelaus.

the former kind of oratory, "like the wintry snows," that is thick-pouring, continuous, abounding, and, in fine, coming from the gods and the heavens. "But to many short speeches are more agreeable." So they are; to do-nothing folks, whose lazy whims it would be ridiculous to look to, as if they could decide the point. If you took counsel of these people, it would be best not merely to speak briefly, but not to speak at all.

Such is, up to the present, my opinion, which I shall change if you dissent from it; but in that case I shall ask you to explain clearly *why* it is that you dissent. For though I ought to give in to your authority, yet it seems to me that in a matter of such importance it would be preferable to yield not to authority but to reason. Accordingly, if you do not think me wrong, write to that effect—as short a letter as you please—still write, for you will be confirming my judgment. If you do think me wrong, prepare a prodigiously long one. But haven't I bribed you by imposing on you the necessity of a short letter only in case you agree with me, of a prodigiously long one if you differ?

(21.)

To Paternus.

I place much confidence in the judgment of your eyes as well as in that of your mind; not because you have much discernment (so don't flatter yourself), but because you have as much as I have; though, by the by, *that* is a good deal. Joking apart, I consider the slaves bought for me, on your advice, to be proper fellows. It remains to be seen whether they are honest, a point which in the matter of slaves is judged of by the ears better than by the eyes.*

* *I.e.*, we shall learn this from the character which others will give of them. Döring supposes this letter to contain a gentle rebuke to Paternus for having bought slaves of good appearance, but neglecting to get a character with them. It is possible that Pliny had not yet seen them; in that case *credo* will mean, "I can believe that," "I have no doubt that," instead of "I consider," as given in the text.

(22.)

To Catilius Severus.

I have now been tied to Rome for a considerable time, and in a state of great agitation too. I am distressed by the long and persistent illness of Titius Aristo, the object of my especial admiration and regard. He is indeed unsurpassed in respectability of character, in virtue, in learning; so that it is not so much one man as letters themselves and all the liberal arts which seem to be in the highest degree imperilled in the person of one man. What a knowledge he has of the law, whether relating to the state or to individuals! What a quantity of matters, what a quantity of precedents, what a mass of ancient lore, does he hold in his head! There is nothing you want to learn which he is not able to teach you. To me assuredly, whenever I am searching for some out-of-the-way information, he is a treasury of knowledge. To begin with, how reliable are his observations, and how weighty too, how modest and becoming his caution! What is there that he does not know offhand? Yet he constantly hesitates and deliberates, owing to the conflict of reasons which, with his keen and powerful judgment, he traces up to their sources and first principles, distinguishing between them and balancing them. Add to this his abstemiousness at table and the sobriety of his attire. His very chamber and his couch itself always seem to me, when I look at them, to present a kind of image of old-world simplicity. All these qualities are set off by the grandeur of his soul, which does nothing with a view to display, and everything with a view to conscience, and seeks for the reward of virtuous deeds not from the applause of the vulgar, but from the deeds themselves. In short, none of your philosophers, who advertise their love of wisdom by their external appearance, will easily stand a comparison with such a man as this. He does not, to be sure, haunt the gym-

nasia or the public arcades, nor amuse his own leisure and that of others with lengthy dissertations. His time is spent in his toga and in the transaction of business. Many he assists in court, many more in consultation. Yet to none of your philosophers will he yield even the first place in moral purity, loyalty, integrity, or fortitude.

You would marvel, if you were present, at his patience in bearing this very illness; how he resists pain, how he stints his thirst, how, lying still and covered up, he endures the incredible heat of fever. He lately summoned me and a few others of his most intimate friends, and begged us to consult the doctors as to the issue of his illness, so that, if it were incapable of yielding to treatment, he might withdraw from life by his own act; if, however, it should be merely obstinate and protracted, he might fight against it and remain; for that he owed this to the prayers of his wife, he owed this to the tears of his daughter, he owed this even to us his friends, in order that he might not deceive our hopes, provided they were not futile, by a voluntary death. Now this seems to me a course in the highest degree difficult and worthy of especial praise. For to rush on death in a kind of impetuous and impulsive way is to do what many can do; whereas, to deliberate, to weigh the incentives to death, and, according as reason shall prompt, to accept or decline the fatal resolution—this is the part of a great mind.

The doctors indeed promise a favourable issue. It remains for the deity to confirm these promises and to free me at length from this solicitude: released from which, I shall return to my house at Laurentum, in other words, to my books and my writing-tablets and my studious retirement. For just now my attendance on the sick man leaves me no time, and my anxiety leaves me no desire, to read or to write anything. You are now in possession of my fears, hopes, and future plans into the bargain. Pray write me in turn, but in a more cheery letter than this, what you have been doing, are doing, and are thinking of doing.

It will be no mean solace to my perturbed mind that *you* have nothing to complain of.

(23.)

To Pompeius Falco.

You ask my opinion as to whether you ought to plead causes during your tribuneship. It makes a vast difference what you hold the tribuneship to be—whether an empty shadow and a mere name without honour, or an authority invested with the highest sanctions, such as should suffer degradation at the hands of no man, least of all at those of the holder. With regard to myself during my tenure of the office, I may perhaps have erred in imagining myself to be of some account; yet, just as though I had been, I abstained from pleading causes. And this, firstly, because it appeared to me most unseemly that one in whose presence every one is bound to rise, and to give place, should himself stand while every one else is sitting; next, that one who can impose silence on all should himself be silenced by the hour-glass; again, that he whom it is unlawful to interrupt should have to listen to actual scurrilities, and be looked upon as mean-spirited if he passed them over, and arrogant if he punished them. Moreover, there was this difficulty before my eyes; suppose I had been appealed to in my official capacity, either by the person for whom, or the one against whom, I appeared. Should I interpose as tribune and aid him? or should I keep quiet and hold my tongue, abdicating, so to speak, my magisterial office, and constituting myself a private individual? Moved by these considerations, I preferred to exhibit myself as a tribune to all rather than an advocate to a few. But as to you, I repeat, it makes a vast difference what you hold the tribuneship to be, and what sort of part you propose to play, which, in the case of a wise man, should be so fitted to him that it may be played out to the end.

(24.)

To Baebius Hispanus.

Tranquillus, my chum, wants to buy a small property which your friend is said to have in the market. Please see that he buys it at a fair price, for then, and then only, will he be pleased with his bargain. A bad purchase is always disagreeable, chiefly because it seems to reproach its owner with his folly. Now, in this little property, if the price be only favourable, there is much to tempt the fancy of my friend Tranquillus—the neighbourhood of the city, the easiness of access, the moderate size of the house, the extent of the land, enough to amuse, not to engross him. For your scholars (and such he is), when they are proprietors, are amply satisfied with so much of the soil as permits them to lift their heads from their books, refresh their eyes, crawl along their boundaries, always keeping to the same path, knowing all their tiny vines, and able to number their diminutive shrubs. This I have set before you that you may better understand how much he will owe to me, and I to you, if he buys this little country place, recommended by so many attractions, at such a reasonable price as not to leave room for repentance.

BOOK II.

(I.)

To Romanus.

It is some years since such a splendid, and indeed memorable, spectacle has been exhibited to the eyes of the Roman people, as that of the public funeral of Verginius Rufus, a citizen of the greatest distinction and renown, and one who was fortunate in an equal degree. For thirty years he survived his glorious deeds; he read poems, he read histories written about himself; he was a witness to his own fame with posterity. He passed through his third consulship, thereby filling the loftiest station open to a subject, since he had refused that of a prince. He escaped those emperors by whom he had been suspected, and even hated, on account of his virtues; and the best of them, the one who loved him most, he left behind him in life, as though he had been reserved for this very honour of a public funeral. He outlived his eighty-third year, in the most perfect composure of mind, and the object of corresponding veneration. He enjoyed robust health, except that his hands used to shake, yet short of feeling pain. Only, the approach of death * was somewhat severe and tedious; though this circumstance itself was a credit to him. For as he was practising his voice,† in view to a speech of thanks which he had to make to the Emperor,

* *Aditus mortis.* Either "the approach *of* death" or "his approach *to* death." The former seems to me preferable.

† *Vocem præparare.* Not, says Döring, to exercise, practise, try the voice, but to study the delivery of, *i.e.*, rehearse the speech. But what follows is against this. No speech of thanks to the Emperor could have made up an immense book.

on his appointment as consul, the book he held, which happened to be of considerable size, slipped out of his hands—aged as he was, and in a standing posture too—by its own weight. In the act of snatching at it to hold it together,* his foot failed him on the polished and slippery floor; he fell and broke his hipbone, and his years preventing its being properly set, it would not come together again as it should. The obsequies of this great man have reflected the highest lustre upon the prince, upon the age, and upon the Forum and Rostra as well. His eulogy was pronounced by Cornelius Tacitus. What a supreme crowning point to his good fortune to obtain the most eloquent of eulogists!

So *he* is gone, full of years and full of honours, even of those which he refused. *We* have to miss him and regret him as a model of a bygone age; I, for my part, particularly, who loved as much as I admired him, and that not merely from a public point of view. For, firstly, we came from the same part of the country; our chief towns were contiguous; and more than this, our estates and property joined each other. In the next place, he was left my guardian, and always exhibited towards me the affection of a parent. So it was that, on the occasions of my candidature, he honoured me with his voice; so he always hastened from his retirement to welcome me in all the offices I held, though he had long since given up this kind of complimentary visit; so on the day when the Augurs usually nominate those whom they judge most worthy of the Augurship, he always nominated me. Nay more, during this last illness of his, fearing that he might chance to be appointed on the commission of five for reducing the public expenditure, which was being constituted by a decree of the Senate, although so many of his friends survived who were old men and of consular rank, he selected me, at my present age, as his substitute, and in these words too: "I would even intrust my son to you, if

* The usual form of Roman books must be borne in mind.

I had one."* These are the reasons which oblige me to pour my griefs into your bosom for a death which seems almost premature; if indeed it be allowable either to grieve for, or to call by the name of "death" at all, that which has put an end to the mortal existence rather than the life of so great a man. For he lives still, and will live for ever; he will even occupy a larger share in the thoughts and discourse of men now that he is withdrawn from their eyes. There were many other things which I wished to write to you, but my mind is entirely a prey to this one subject of contemplation. I think of Verginius. I see Verginius. I hear, address, grasp Verginius in what are now vain but lively images. We possess, it may be, and shall hereafter possess, citizens his equals in great qualities—in renown no one!

(2.)

To Paulinus.

I am angry without being clear that I ought to be. Still I *am* angry. You know that affection is occasionally unjust, often headstrong, at all times quarrelsome about trifles. Here, at any rate, is a weighty reason—whether a just one or not I don't know. However, taking it to be as just as it is weighty, I am grievously angry with you for not having sent me any letters for such a long time. There is only one way in which you can obtain my forgiveness, and that is by now at all events writing to me frequently and at great length. This is the only excuse which will seem to me valid; all others will be treated as false. I am not going to listen to this kind of thing—"I was not at Rome," or "I was too busy." As for this—"I was too unwell," why, the gods won't allow of that being said, I hope. I myself am at my country-house, in the

* *Mandarem*, sc. *filium*, or else *hoc*, this commission. In the latter case, the sense will be, "Even if I had a son, I would choose you in preference to him as my representative."

enjoyment partly of study, partly of indolence: retirement is the parent of both.

(3.)

To Nepos.

Great was the reputation which had preceded Isæus, yet he was found to surpass it. His powers of speech, his copiousness, his richness are extraordinary. He always speaks extemporaneously, but just as though everything had been written out long before. His language is Greek, indeed Attic. His prefatory remarks are terse, graceful, and agreeable, at times of a grave and lofty tone. He calls for several subjects of discussion, and allows his hearers to make their choice, frequently even to select their sides. He rises and composes his attire, then he begins. At once, and almost at the same moment, everything comes to his hand, profound ideas present themselves, and expressions—oh, such expressions!—so choice and polished! In these offhand effusions, a great amount of reading, a great habit of composition, are revealed. His preludes are to the point, his narratives clear, his attacks vigorous, his embellishments noble: in short, he teaches, delights, and moves you, so that you are in doubt as to which he does best. He indulges in frequent "enthymemata," * frequent syllogisms, concise and reasoned out, such as it is difficult to produce even with pen in hand. His memory is incredible; he will repeat from a long way back what he has spoken extempore, without a mistake in a word. To this degree of skill has he attained by study and practice; for night and day he applies himself to nothing else, hears and talks of nothing else.

He has passed his sixtieth year, and is still a scholar and nothing else—a class of men than whom none are more

* *Enthymemata*, which had a technical sense in logic (a syllogism drawn from probable premises, and later a syllogism with one premiss suppressed, *cf.* Liddell and Scott, *sub voce*), is here used in the sense of "reflections, general considerations."

honest and straightforward. For we who undergo the friction of the courts and of real lawsuits acquire a great spice of roguishness into the bargain, albeit unwillingly.* Schools and lecture-rooms and fictitious causes are innocent and harmless affairs, and no less sources of enjoyment, particularly to old men. For what can be a greater source of enjoyment in age than that which is most delightful in youth? Wherefore I for my part esteem Isæus not only the most eloquent but the happiest of men; and if you are not eager to make his acquaintance, you must be made of stone or of iron. So, come, if not on other accounts, nor on *my* account, at any rate that you may hear him. Have you never read how a certain man of Gades,† moved by the name and renown of Titus Livius, came from the extremity of the earth for the purpose of seeing him, and the moment he had seen him went back? It would be "wanting in a sense of the beautiful," it would be the part of an illiterate, it would be dulness and almost disgrace, not to regard such an acquaintance as worth the trouble—than which none can be pleasanter, none more honourable, in short, none more conformable to nature. You will perhaps say, "I have here authors no less eloquent, whom I can read." Very true; but there is always an opportunity for reading, and not always one for hearing. Besides, we are much more affected, to use a common expression, by the living voice. For even suppose what you read to possess greater spirit, yet there will remain more deeply seated in your mind what the pronunciation, countenance, demeanour, and even the gestures of the speaker have implanted there. Unless, indeed, we esteem as false the well-known remark of Æschines, who, when he had read to the Rhodians an oration of Demosthenes, amidst universal applause, is reported to have added, "What if you had heard the *roar of the beast* himself?" And yet Æschines, if we are to believe Demosthenes, was

* Or, "however unwilling we may be." *Malitia* is used here in the sense of cunning and artifice.

† Cadiz.

"extremely clear-voiced." He confessed, however, that the same oration would have been delivered far more effectively by the author in person. All which goes to this, to make you hear Isæus, if only to be able to say that you have heard him.

(4.)

To Calvina.

If your father had been in debt to a number of people, or to any single individual in the world, other than myself, it would very likely have been a matter of doubt whether you ought to enter on the administration of his estate,* which would have been a troublesome matter even for a man. But since, moved by the ties of consanguinity, I constituted myself his sole creditor by paying off all the rest (who, I won't say, were more pressing, but who at any rate looked more carefully after their money); and since, moreover, during his lifetime, I contributed a hundred thousand sesterces towards your wedding portion, besides that sum which your father guaranteed out of my property, as it were (for it was out of *my* property that it had to be paid)—in all this you have a strong pledge of my kindly feeling towards you, in full reliance on which you ought to defend your departed parents' reputation and honour. To which intent, that I may not admonish you in word rather than in deed, I shall bid the whole of your father's debt to me to be written off. Nor need you fear that such a present will inconvenience me. My means are, to be sure, only moderate, while my rank involves expenditure, and my small estates are of such a character that the income from them is slender, at any rate precarious. But what is lacking in income is made up by economy, which is, as it were, the spring from which my liberality flows: one which, nevertheless, must be hus-

* *Hereditatem adire*, to accept the position of *heres*, with all its responsibilities.

banded, that it may not be dried up by too great profusion. It shall be husbanded, however, in the case of others: in *your* case, there will be a ready justification, even if the bounds be exceeded.

(5.)

To Lupercus.

I have sent you the speech which you have so frequently pressed me for, and which has been so often promised by me; not, however, as yet the whole of it, for a portion of it is still under final revision. Meanwhile I have thought it not amiss to submit to your appreciation those parts which appeared to me to be in a finished state. On these I beg you to bestow the same close attention which they received from their author; for never yet have I had anything in hand which required me to exhibit more watchful care. In my other speeches, my diligence only and trustworthiness were submitted to the judgment of mankind; here, further, my patriotism was concerned. Hence, the book itself has grown, while I rejoiced to celebrate and dilate upon my native country, and at the same time to help to defend it,* as well as to glorify it. Do you, however, cut out these very passages as far as reason shall dictate. For when I consider the censoriousness and the whims of readers, I understand that their favour is to be sought by the moderate size in particular of a book. Yet, while exacting from you this strictness, I am at the same time compelled to put in an opposite request, that you will look with indulgence on many passages. Some concessions must be made to youthful ears, particularly if the subject-matter is not opposed to such handling. It is surely allowable to treat descriptions of places, which will be rather numerous in this book, not merely in a historical

* *Defensioni.* We do not know any more of this speech than Pliny tells us here. It is thought to have been one on behalf of his native place (*patria*), Comum, which was engaged probably in some lawsuit at Rome.

but almost in a poetical fashion. If, however, there be any one who thinks I have done this in a lighter way than the serious character of the oration requires, the severity, if I may so express it, of this reader must needs be deprecated by the remaining portions of the speech. I have at any rate striven to interest readers of the most opposite characters, by a great variety of styles, and just as I fear that particular parts will not, in accordance with individual tastes, be approved by some, so I am pretty confident that this very variety will commend the book to all as a whole. For even in taking account of a banquet, though individually we may abstain from a number of dishes, yet we often unite in praising the dinner as a whole, nor do those viands which our taste rejects take away from the merit of those which have attracted it.

Now I wish all this to be understood, not as believing myself to have succeeded, but as having laboured to succeed, and that perhaps not in vain, if only you will devote your attention in the interim to what I have sent, and presently to what will follow. You will say that you cannot do this thoroughly unless you are first made acquainted with the entire speech. I admit it. For the present, however, what I have sent will become more familiar to you, and in this there will be certain corrections capable of being made in the parts. For if you were to inspect a head broken off from a statue, or some limb or other, though of course you could not gather from it its harmony and proportion to the rest, yet you might judge whether, taken by itself, it was a work of art or not. For this and no other reason, specimen numbers of books are circulated, because it is believed that a part may be complete in itself without the remainder.

The kind of charm there is in conversing with you has led me further than was intended; here, however, I must end, for fear the limits which in my opinion should be observed even in an oration be exceeded in a letter.

(6.)

To Avitus.

It would be tedious to recall, nor is it of any consequence, how it came to pass that I (though but slightly acquainted with him), dined with a certain gentleman who unites, in his own estimation, splendour with economy, in mine, meanness with extravagance. For he and a few others had the best of everything served them, while the rest of the company had common fare and mere scraps. Even the wine he had divided into three sorts, in little flagons; not that people might have the power of choosing, but that they might not have the right of declining; one sort for himself and us, another for his humbler friends (for he puts his friends into categories), another for his and our freedmen. My next neighbour at table remarked upon this, and asked me if I approved of it. I said, No. "What custom, then, do *you* follow?" says he. "I set the same fare before everybody; for I invite people to dine, not to be invidiously ticketed, and I treat as my entire equals in all respects those whom I have made already my equals by placing them at my table." "What, your freedmen too?" "Certainly; for then I look on them as my guests, not my freedmen." "It must cost you a great deal," says he. "Not at all," I replied. "How can that be?" "Why, because my freedmen don't drink the same wine that I do, but I drink the same wine as my freedmen." And, by Hercules, if you only restrain your gluttony, it is no great hardship to share with a number of others what you use yourself. This gluttony, then, must be kept in check; it must, so to speak, be reduced to the ranks, if you would moderate your expenditure; and it is somewhat better to arrange for this by curbing yourself rather than by insulting other people.

To what end all this? In order that the show which some people make at their tables may not impose on

you, my young friend, with your excellent disposition, under the guise of economy. It becomes my affection towards you, whenever a case of this kind occurs, to admonish you by an example of what you should shun. Remember, then, that there is nothing more to be avoided than this strange association of extravagance and meanness—vices which are loathsome enough when separate and asunder, and still more loathsome when they are combined.

(7.)

To Macrinus.

Yesterday, on the motion of the Emperor, the Senate decreed a triumphal statue to Vestricius Spurinna, not in the same way as to many others who never stood in the ranks, never saw a camp, in short, never heard the sound of a trumpet except at the show, but like to those who were wont to gain this distinction by their sweat and their blood and their great deeds. For Spurinna set the King of the Bructeri upon his throne by force of arms, and with a threat of war tamed by mere terror—the noblest kind of victory—a people of the fiercest character.

He received this, therefore, as a reward for his valour; and further, as a solace to his grief, the honour of a statue to his son Cottius, whom he lost during his absence. A rare thing this in the case of a young man; but the addition was well deserved by his father, whose cruel wound needed some strong remedial application. Besides, Cottius himself had given such bright token of his natural disposition, that it was only right his life, short and contracted as it was, should be extended by this kind of immortality, as it were. He was so well-conducted, so steady, so much looked up to even, that he could challenge in point of high qualities those very seniors to whom he has now been made equal in point of honour. By this honour, however, as I take it, provision was made not only for the

memory of the deceased and the grief of his father, but also for an example. Youth will be incited to the practice of virtue by the establishment of such prizes, open to lads even, provided they be worthy of them. Men of lofty station will be incited to raise children, not only by their joy in those who survive, but by such glorious consolations in the case of those who are lost.

For these reasons I rejoice in the statue to Cottius on public grounds, and no less on private ones. I loved that most consummate young man as ardently as I now impatiently regret him. So it will be very pleasant to me to gaze from time to time upon this effigy of him; from time to time look back at it, to stand under it, to pass by it. For if likenesses of the departed set up in our houses alleviate our grief, how much more must those which, standing in the most frequented places, recall not their appearance and their expression only, but also their greatness and their glory.

(8.)

To Caninius.

Are you studying? or fishing? or hunting? or uniting all these pursuits? They *can* all be united at my Larian place. The lake abounds in fish, the woods which surround the lake in game, and that profoundest of retreats in incentives to study. However, whether you are combining them all, or engaged in any one of them, though I can't say "I *envy* you," yet I am distressed that these pursuits are not permitted *me*, which I yearn for as sick people yearn for wine, baths, and spring water. Shall I never be able to break through, if unable to loosen them, these bonds which so closely confine me? Never, I imagine. For fresh business is always growing on to the old, and yet the old is not completed. So numerous are the coils, so numerous the links, so to speak, by which the chain of my occupations is daily extended.

(9.)

To Apollinaris.

The candidature of my friend Sextus Erucius causes me anxiety and disquiet. I am troubled with apprehensions, and the uneasiness which I did not feel on my own account I am now enduring on his, as though for another self. Moreover, my honour, my reputation, my consideration are at stake. I it was who obtained the *Latus clavus* * for Sextus from our Emperor. I it was who procured the Quæstorship for him. It was on my recommendation that he obtained the right of standing for the tribuneship; and if he does not get the office from the Senate, I fear I shall seem to have deceived the Emperor. Accordingly, every effort must be used by me in order that the world at large shall judge him to be such as the prince, on my representation, believed him to be. And if my zeal were not stimulated by this cause, I should in any case wish to see supported a young man of great virtue, principle, and attainments, one, in short, worthy of all praise, as are, indeed, the whole of his family. For his father is Erucius Clarus, a person of the purest character and of antique mould, an eloquent man, and a skilful pleader in court, conducting his cases with extreme conscientiousness, like determination, and no less modesty. He has for his maternal uncle C. Septicius, than whom I have never known a sincerer, more straightforward, more guileless, more reliable man. As they all vie in loving me, and yet love me equally, so now in the person of one of them I can make a return to all. Accordingly, I am suing my friends, soliciting, canvassing, going the round of houses and public resorts, and ascertaining by my entreaties what I am worth in the way either of influence or interest. And I beg you will think it worth your while to take some

* A broad purple band on the tunic, indicating, as a general rule, senatorial rank; sometimes, it would seem, bestowed on knights.

share of my burden. I will requite you, if you ask for a return; ay, and even if you don't ask for one. You are cherished, courted, you have a numerous society; only show that you wish for a thing, and there will be no lack of those to whom your wishes will be objects of desire.

(10.)

To Octavius.

O apathetic individual, or rather obstinate, and I had almost said cruel one! To keep back such remarkable books for such a time! How long are you going to defraud yourself as well as us: yourself of the greatest renown, and us of the greatest pleasure? Suffer them to be borne on the lips of mankind, and to range through the same bounds as the language of Rome. The expectations formed of them are great and by this time protracted; and these you ought not any longer to disappoint and delay. Some of your verses have become known, having burst their barriers in spite of you. Unless you reunite them to the main body, one day or other, like fugitive slaves, they will find a new owner. Keep before your eyes our mortal condition, from which you can liberate yourself by this kind of memorial alone: all else is frail and fleeting, dies and comes to an end, equally with men themselves.

You will say, as you generally do, "My friends will see to it." * I can only wish you, for my part, friends so faithful, so learned, and so painstaking, as to be both able and willing to undertake such labour and exertion. Yet consider whether it be not a little lacking in foresight to expect from others what you won't do for yourself. Now as to *publishing*, let it be meanwhile as you please. At all events *recite*, that you may be encouraged to publish, and may at length enjoy that satisfaction which I have long since, without rashness, anticipated for you. For I picture to myself the concourse, the admiration, the applause, the

* That is to say, after I am gone.

silence even which awaits you: which last, when I speak, or indeed recite, delights me as much as applause, provided it be an eager silence, one showing attention and a desire to hear more. Forbear, then, to defraud your labours of a reward so great and so assured, by this endless hesitation, which, when it exceeds the bounds, may, there is cause to fear, come to be styled laziness, indolence, and supineness, perhaps even cowardice.

(11.)

To Arrianus.

You are in general delighted when any business has been transacted in the Senate worthy of that body. For though your love of repose has sent you into retirement, yet there remains implanted in your mind a regard for the dignity of the commonwealth. Listen, then, to the transactions of the last few days, memorable from the great position of the personage concerned, salutary from the severity of the example set, and immortal owing to the magnitude of the affair.

Marius Priscus, being accused by the Africans, whom he had governed as proconsul, declined to defend himself, and requested to have judges assigned him.* Cornelius Tacitus and I, who had been appointed counsel for the provincials, deemed it a part of our duty to inform the Senate that Priscus by his enormities and cruelties had transcended such charges as are capable of having judges assigned them, inasmuch as he had received bribes for the condemnation, and even the slaughter, of innocent persons. Fronto Catius, in reply, deprecated inquiry being made into anything that was not covered by the

* *I.e.*, He declined defending himself in the Senate, and asked for a trial before judges. These judges would be empowered to inquire into the charges of extortion, &c., and assess damages. But it seems they would not be entitled to examine into the graver charges brought against him. If, then, the Senate had sent him before this court or commission, it would have been held to acquit him of, or at least to condone, the weightier charges.

law against bribery and extortion: and expert as he is at moving tears, he filled all the sails of his speech with a kind of breeze of commiseration. There was much disputing and clamouring on either side, some declaring that the jurisdiction of the Senate was bounded by the law;* others that it was free and unfettered, and that in proportion as the accused had sinned, so he should be punished. At last, Julius Ferox, consul-elect, an honourable and upright man, pronounced himself in favour of assigning judges to Marius in the interim, and, at the same time, summoning those to whom, it was said, he had sold the penalties inflicted on innocent persons. This opinion not only prevailed, but was absolutely the only one which, after these great disputes, was numerously followed. Indeed, it has been shown by experience that although the first impulses of partiality and compassion are apt to manifest themselves with fire and vehemence, yet they will settle down gradually, extinguished, so to speak, by reflection and consideration. Hence it comes to pass that an opinion which a number of people will support with a confused clamour, no one will be willing to pronounce, when the rest are holding their tongues. For, when you are separated from the crowd, you get a clear view of many things which the crowd serves to conceal.

Those who had been summoned to attend made their appearance—Vitellius Honoratus and Flavius Marcianus. Of these, Honoratus was charged with having bought, for three hundred thousand sesterces,† the banishment of a Roman knight and the capital punishment of seven of his friends: Marcianus with having bought, for seven hundred thousand,† a combination of penalties inflicted on one Roman knight; for he had been beaten with cudgels,

* Their argument seems to have been that Marius had virtually pleaded guilty to the charge of extortion, &c., by demanding judges to estimate damages, and that the Senate was stopped from proceeding further—a strange argument.

† About £2400.

‡ About £5600.

condemned to work in the mines, and finally strangled in prison. Honoratus, however, was withdrawn from the cognisance of the Senate by a timely death, and Marcianus was brought in, in the absence of Priscus. Upon this, Tuccius Cerialis, a man of consular rank, proposed, in virtue of his senatorial right, that Priscus should have notice: either with the idea that he would be a greater object of compassion, or perhaps, on the other hand, of odium, if he were present; or else (as I am strongly inclined to believe) because it was most in accordance with justice that an accusation common to both should be met by each of them, and if it could not be refuted, should be punished in the person of each. The affair was postponed till the next meeting of the Senate, the mere aspect of which was extremely grand. The Emperor presided, for he happened to be consul: add to this that it was the month of January, one of particular note on other accounts,* and also especially from the number of senators it brings together: moreover, the importance of the cause, the expectation and fame of it, which had increased by its postponement, the eagerness, innate in mortals, for an acquaintance with what is remarkable and unusual: all this had called forth every one from every quarter. Picture to yourself our anxiety and apprehension, who had to speak on an affair of such moment in that assembly and in the presence of the Emperor. For my part, I have spoken in the Senate, and not once only; more than that, there is no place where I am habitually listened to with greater favour; and yet, at the moment, everything seemed strange to me, and pervaded me with a strange apprehension. In addition to the particulars above mentioned, the difficulties of the case presented themselves to me: there stood a man but lately of consular rank, lately

* It was the month when the new magistrates entered on their offices. *Mensis cum cetera tum praecipue Senatorum frequentia celeberrimus. Cetera* might here be taken with *frequentia*, when the sense of *celeberrimus* will be different, and the meaning will be, "A month which brings together a number of senators in particular, besides other people."

a member of a sacred college; now, neither.* It was especially disagreeable, then, to have to accuse one already convicted, a man who, though weighed down by the enormity of his crimes, was yet in like manner protected by the pity resulting from his having been previously, and, as it might seem, finally condemned.† However, I collected my mind and my thoughts, and began to speak with no less approval on the part of my audience than anxiety on my own. I spoke for nearly five hours: to twelve water-clocks of most liberal measure which had been allowed me, four fresh ones were added.‡ So greatly did the very topics which seemed to me, before speaking, to present difficulties, and to make against me, turn to my advantage when I did speak. The Emperor, indeed, showed such favour towards me, such care for me even (perhaps solicitude would be too strong a term), that he frequently suggested to my freedman, who stood behind me, to beg me spare my voice and my strength, whenever he thought I was exerting myself with greater vehemence than my delicate frame might be able to bear. Claudius Marcellinus replied to me on behalf of Marcianus. Thereupon the Senate rose, being adjourned to the following day; for by this time a fresh speech could not have been entered on without being cut short by nightfall.

Next day, Marius was defended by Salvius Liberalis, a subtle, methodical, incisive, eloquent speaker, and to be sure in this case he put forth all his powers. Cornelius Tacitus answered him with great eloquence, and, what is remarkable in his style of speaking, with great dignity. Fronto Catius rejoined on behalf of Marius, in an excellent

* The Judices (judges) had condemned him for bribery since the previous sitting of the Senate.

† *Quasi peractae damnationis miseratio tuebatur.* I prefer taking *quasi* with *damn.*, not with the whole sentence, as Schaefer and Döring do. It might seem that he had, as it were, "got over" his condemnation, by the sentence of the Judices; that no more charges should be brought against him. *Peragere damn.* occurs again in vi. 31, "to pursue a charge to the end."

‡ *Clepsydrae,* water-clocks, by which time was measured; made of glass and other materials.

speech, and—as the situation now demanded—devoted his time rather to entreating the Senate than to defending his client. The evening closed this speech, yet not so as to interrupt it. So the proceedings lasted into a third day. Surely this was in itself admirable and in the good old style: that the sittings of the Senate were closed by nightfall, that it was called together for three days, and kept together for three days. Cornutus Tertullus, consul-elect, a man of great distinction and unswerving integrity, moved that the seven hundred thousand sesterces which Marius had received should be paid into the Treasury, and that Marius himself should be banished from Rome and from Italy; Marcianus from Africa into the bargain. By way of conclusion to his motion, he further proposed that inasmuch as Tacitus and I had discharged the office of advocate imposed on us with diligence and intrepidity, the Senate adjudged that we had acted in a way worthy of the functions assigned us. The consuls-elect assented to this motion, and, indeed, all the men of consular rank, till it came to the turn of Pompeius Collega: *he* opined for paying the seven hundred thousand into the Treasury, and also banishing* Marcianus for five years, but for being contented, in the case of Marius, with the penalties for bribery which he had already incurred. There were many for each of these proposals; perhaps, on the whole, a majority for the latter—the more lenient, not to call it the laxer, of the two. For some even of those who had seemed to agree with Cornutus now followed this senator, who had given his opinion after themselves. However, when a division took place, those who stood by the consuls' chairs began to go over to the side of Cornutus. Whereupon, those who still allowed themselves to be numbered with Collega crossed to the opposite side of the House, and Collega was left with a small following. The latter complained after-

* *Relegare*, a lighter form of banishment than the *interdictio* mentioned just before. As we have no separate words to express the different senses in English, we must again render by "banish."

wards a good deal of those who had set him on, particularly of Regulus, who had left him in the lurch on a motion which he (Regulus) had himself prompted. Indeed Regulus is generally of such a fluctuating disposition, that he is full of daring and full of cowardice as well.

Such was the end of this most important investigation. There still remains, however, a public matter of some importance—the affair of Hostilius Firminus, lieutenant to Marius Priscus, who was implicated in the cause, and got very roughly handled. For Martianus's cash accounts, and also a speech which he made to the senators of Leptis, proved that he had lent his aid to Priscus for services of the basest kind; that he had covenanted for fifty thousand denarii* to be paid by Marcianus; that he had further received in person ten thousand sesterces, under a most disreputable title, that of "purveyor of perfumes," a title not ill-suited to the manners of the man, with his perpetual trimmed hair and levigated skin. It was resolved, on the motion of Cornutus, that his case should be laid before the Senate at its next meeting; for at that time, whether accidentally or from the effect of conscience, he was absent.

So now you have the news of the town. Write me in return that of the country. How are your shrubs doing, and your vineyards, and your corn crops, and those choice sheep of yours? In a word, send me back a letter as long as my own, or else henceforth look for none but the shortest of letters from me.

(12.)

To Arrianus.

The "public matter" which, as I lately wrote you word, was a remanet after the trial of Marius Priscus, has been

* A denarius being four sesterces, this = about £1600; a little below 10,000 sesterces = about £80. *Sestertia*, which Keil reads, would make £80,000, which seems too much (one *sestertium* = 1000 sesterces). The £1600 was part of the £5600 which, as we saw above, Marcianus was to pay as blood-money to Marius.

"trimmed and shaved,"* whether satisfactorily or not I cannot say. Firminus, brought before the Senate, answered to a charge which was patent. Then followed conflicting proposals on the part of the consuls-elect. Cornutus Tertullus moved that he be expelled the Senate; Acutius Nerva that in the assignment by lot of provinces his name be left out.† This latter proposal carried the day, as being the more lenient, whereas it is, in fact,‡ the harsher and severer of the two. For what can be more miserable than to be cut off and excepted from the privileges of the senatorship, and yet not to be exempt from its labours and its annoyances? What can be more oppressive than for a man, to whom such ignominy has been attached, not to be able to hide away in solitude, but to have to exhibit himself as a sight and a show on so lofty an eminence? In addition to this, what, from a public point of view, can be more incongruous or more indecent than that a person branded by the Senate should sit in the Senate, and should be on equal terms with the very persons who have branded him; that one debarred from a proconsulship for his disgraceful conduct in his lieutenancy should yet sit in judgment on proconsuls, and, after being condemned for his own dirty practices, should condemn or acquit others. Yet so the majority decided. Votes, you know, are numbered, not weighed. Nor can this be otherwise in a public assembly, where there is nothing so unequal as this very equality; for though the members are not on a par in point of sagacity, yet they are all on a par in the right to vote.

I have carried out my promise, and fulfilled the engagement contained in my former letter, which, from the time that has elapsed, I conclude you must have already received; for I intrusted it to a speedy and careful mes-

* *Circumcisum et adrasum*, "clipped and shaved," perhaps an allusion to the dandified ways of Firminus, mentioned at the end of the last letter. *Nescio an*, *haud scio an*, in Pliny, usually express simple doubt. "I know not," "I cannot say."

† Taking away from him all chance of going out as a provincial governor, and pillaging on his own account.

‡ *Alioqui* here is not easily translatable. It is the French "du reste."

senger, unless he has met with some hindrance on his way. It is your turn now to repay, first my former missive, next this one, by a return letter charged with as much matter as possible from your neighbourhood.

(13.)

To Priscus.

Not only do you seize with avidity every opportunity of obliging me, but I too, for my part, would rather be in your debt than any one else's. So, for a double reason, I have determined to apply to you before all others for a favour which I am greatly anxious to obtain. You are in command of a very fine army; so there has been ample material for your favours; and, besides, the time has been long during which you have had it in your power to advance your own friends. Now turn your attention to mine; they shall not be numerous. *You,* to be sure, would prefer they were numerous; but my modesty is satisfied with one or two, say rather one, and that one shall be Voconius Romanus. His father was a distinguished member of the Equestrian order; still more distinguished is his step-father, or rather his second father, for to such a name his pious affection has entitled him to succeed. His mother was of a leading family in Upper Spain. You know the character of that province for discretion and solidity. He himself was lately Flamen. When we were fellow-students I had a close and intimate regard for him; he was my associate in town and country; with him I shared my serious and my sportive hours. Where indeed could there be found a more faithful friend or a more entertaining companion? Marvellous is the charm of his conversation; marvellous that of his very countenance and expression. Add to this an intelligence of a lofty character, subtle, agreeable, ready, accomplished in pleading causes. As for the letters he writes, you would imagine the Muses in person were talking Latin.

Greatly as he is beloved by me, he does not yield to me in affection. For my part, when we were young men together, I was most eager to do everything for him that lay in my power at that time of my life; and I have lately obtained for him from our gracious prince the rights of those who have three children;* rights which the latter, though according them sparingly and with discrimination, nevertheless conceded at my request as though the selection had been his own. These services rendered by me I can maintain in no better way than by adding to them; especially as Voconius himself acknowledges them so gratefully as by his receipt of previous favours to merit future ones.

You now know what the man is, how approved and dear to me. Advance him then, I pray you, in a way which accords with your disposition and station. First of all, love the man. For though you bestow on him the greatest gifts in your power, you can bestow nothing greater than your friendship. And that he is worthy † of *that*, even to the most intimate degree of familiarity—that you might the better know this, I have briefly portrayed to you his pursuits, his character, in short, his whole life. I would protract my prayers were it not that you would be unwilling to be further entreated, and that I have been praying all through this letter. For *he* entreats, and that too in the most efficacious way, who gives reasons for his entreaties.

(14.)

To Maximus.

You are right in your supposition. I am distracted by my causes in the Centumviral Court,‡ which are practice

* *Jus trium liberorum.* Certain privileges and immunities were enjoyed by those who had three or more children; and these were sometimes (as here) bestowed as a favour on others.

† *Capacem*, lit. capable of containing.

‡ The court or chamber of a hundred judges. See Bk i. Letter 5, note.

for me rather than pleasure. For most of them are trumpery and insignificant; rarely does one occur that is noticeable from the position of the parties or the importance of the issue. Add to this that there are few in whose company I care to plead; the remainder are impudent fellows, and indeed for the most part obscure striplings, who have come there for the purpose of declaiming; and with such want of propriety and recklessness, that my friend Attilius seems to have expressed it exactly when he said, "Boys commence with Centumviral causes at the bar as they do with Homer at school." Here, as there, what is first in importance has come to be taken first in time. But, by Hercules, before my day (so old people will tell you), young men, even of the highest families, were not admitted to practice, except upon the introduction of some man of consular rank; such was the respect paid to this noble profession. Now-a-days all barriers of shame and respect are broken down; everything is open to everybody; they are no longer introduced—they rush in. The pleaders are followed by an audience of the same stamp, hired and bought for the purpose; a bargain is made with a speculator; in the middle of the court, presents are distributed as openly as in the dining-room. For a like consideration, these people will pass from one court to another. Hence they are humorously called "Sophocless," * and have received the Latin name of "Laudiceni." † And yet this vile practice, thus stigmatised in both languages, grows day by day. Yesterday two of my nomenclators ‡ (to be sure they are of the age of those who have just assumed the toga! §) were being carried off to applaud by a gift of three denarii apiece. Such is the price which it will cost you to become an

* Σοφοκλεῖς, shouters of "bravo," with a humorous reference to the tragedian's name.

† Toadies for the sake of a meal.

‡ Slaves who accompanied their masters in the streets to tell them the names of people whom they met.

§ This is ironical. "They are full fourteen or fifteen years of age!" They are at the age at which a citizen would assume the *toga virilis*.

orator of the first water. For this sum the benches, however numerous, are filled; for the same, a huge crowd is collected, and no end of cheering called forth, as soon as the leader of the chorus has given the signal. A signal is of course wanted for people who don't understand, who don't even listen; for most of them do not listen, nor are there any who applaud more heartily than these. If you should happen at any time to be passing through the court-house, and should wish to know how each speaker acquits himself, there is no necessity for going on the platform or listening to the speeches; it is easy to guess; be assured that he is the worst speaker who receives the greatest applause.

The first person who introduced this style of audience was Largius Licinus, yet only to the extent of bringing people together to hear him, by simple invitation: so, certainly, I remember to have heard from my tutor, Quintilian. He used to tell this story: "I was in the habit of attending on Domitius Afer. As he was once pleading before the Centumviri, slowly and impressively (for this was his style of speaking), he heard from a neighbouring court * an extraordinary and unusual noise. He paused in astonishment. When silence was restored, he resumed where he had broken off. Once more the noise, once more a pause on his part. After a fresh silence, he continued his speech for the third time. At last, he inquired who was speaking, and the reply was "Licinus." Upon this, he threw up his brief, with the observation, "Judges, my profession is at an end!" And indeed in other ways it was coming to an end at the time when Afer thought it ended: *now*, of a truth it is well-nigh utterly extinguished and destroyed. I am ashamed to allude to the mincing falsetto † in which the speeches are uttered, and the offen-

* This tribunal was divided into several courts or chambers, as we have seen above.

† *Fractâ voce* seems from this and other passages, to include the ideas of a weak, feminine voice (many of these speakers, we have just been told, were mere striplings), and also an affected lisp or drawl.

sive character of the cheering which greets them. Clapping of hands only, or rather cymbals and drums alone, are wanting to these sing-song performances; yells, however (there is indeed no other word to express a kind of applause which would be indecent even in a theatre), are in great superfluity. For myself, however, I am still kept in these courts, and prevented from leaving them by the requirements of my friends and a consideration of my own age;* for I fear people might perhaps think I was not so much turning my back on these discreditable scenes as shirking hard work. However, I go there more rarely than my habit was, and this is a commencement of gradually retiring from them.

(15.)

To Valerianus.

How does your old Marsian property treat you? And your new purchase? Are you pleased with the estate, now that it is your own? A rare thing, to be sure! Indeed, nothing is so agreeable when you have once got it as it was when you longed to have it. As for me, the farms inherited from my mother treat me but so so; yet they delight me as coming from my mother; and besides, long endurance has hardened me. Constant growling comes at last to this, that one is ashamed to growl.

(16.)

To Annianus.†

You, with your usual kindness, advise me that the codicils of Acilianus (who had made me heir to half his

* *I.e.*, he was still too young to think retirement proper.

† This letter requires explanation. Acilianus had made a regular will, leaving Pliny heir to half his property. He had subsequently written certain codicils—*not*, as some suppose, directing Pliny to pay his legacy, or a part of it, to others, for it seems that such codicils would have been valid, even without a will; see Mr. George Long's article "Testamentum" in the Dict. of Greek and Roman Ant., where this case is referred to—but in which other

property) must be regarded as invalid because they are not confirmed by will. This provision of the law was not unknown to me either, considering that it is known even to those who are ignorant of everything else. But I have bound myself by a kind of law of my own, to carry out the wishes of the dead, even though legally incomplete, just as though they were in perfect form. Now it is clear that those codicils were written by the hand of Acilianus. Although, therefore, they are not confirmed by will, yet they shall be observed by me, just as if they were so con firmed, particularly as there is no opening for an informer.* For if there were cause to fear that what I had made over might be escheated to the public, it would probably become me to act with more consideration and caution. Since, however, an heir is at liberty to make a donation of what reverts to him of a heritage, there is nothing to stand in the way of this law of mine, nor are the public laws opposed to it.

(17.)

To Gallus.

You are surprised that my Laurentine, or, if you prefer it, my Laurens country-house, is so particularly agreeable to me. You will cease to be surprised when you are made

specific legacies had been made; and to make these valid, a will was necessary. These legacies would have diminished Pliny's share or reduced it to nothing. Annianus accordingly tells him that he may treat the codicils as so much waste paper. Pliny replies that he shall carry out the testator's wishes, and that there is no law to prevent him. For the codicils being legally void, his whole half share reverts to him (*subscdit*), and of course he can do with it as he likes, *i.e.*, pay the above-named lagacies out of it. There is clearly no ground, he adds, for any information being laid against me on this account.

* *Cum delatori locus non sit.* Some take this to mean, "since there are now no longer any informers," these pests having been banished by Trajan. And so I formerly took it, Introd. to Juvenal, Satire I. But the sense evidently is, "This is no case for an informer at all." As he says below, "The public laws are not opposed to it." Though the worst kind of *delatores* had been put an end to, yet we are not to suppose that informations might not still be laid, *e.g.*, as among us for violation of the excise laws, &c.

acquainted with the charms of the villa, the advantages of the situation, and the stretch of the sea-coast. It is only seventeen miles distant from town, so that having got through all you had to do, you can go and stay there with your day's work already secured and disposed of.* There is access to it by more than one road, for the Laurentine and Ostian highways lead in the same direction; only, you must branch off from the Laurentine at the fourteenth and the Ostian at the eleventh milestone. Either way, the next part of the road is for some distance sandy, rather heavy and slow-going for a pair, but short and soft for a saddle-horse. The prospect is constantly varying: at one time the road is hemmed in by woods which close in upon you: at another, it stretches through broad pastures and opens out before you: you see numerous flocks of sheep, and troops of horses, and herds of cattle, which are driven down from the hills in winter, and grow sleek on the herbage and in the spring temperature. The house is sufficient in point of accommodation without being expensive to keep up. As you enter, there is a vestibule, plain but not mean; next a hall with columns, rounded in the form of the letter D, enclosing a small but pleasant space, an excellent retreat against stormy weather, being protected by glazed windows and still more by overhanging eaves. Facing the middle of it is a courtyard of cheerful aspect; next, a rather handsome dining-room which projects on to the shore, so that whenever the sea is raised by the south-west wind, it is just wetted by the last spray of the broken waves. It is furnished all round with folding-doors, or windows as large as folding-doors, so that with its sides and its front it faces as it were three different seas. At the back it looks through the courtyard, the hall with the columns, the open space, the hall again, then the vestibule, right to the woods and distant hills. To the left of this, a little way back, is a large saloon, and next

* *Salvo jam et composito die* is variously rendered: but I can get no other sense out of the words than that given above.

to it another smaller one, which admits the morning sun through one window and enjoys the last of the evening sun through another. From this there is a more distant but more sheltered view of the sea below. By the projection of this saloon and the dining-room just mentioned, an angle is formed which holds and intensifies the brightest sunshine. This is my winter-snuggery, this is also the place of exercise for my household: here every wind is stilled, except such as bring clouds with them, and only drive us from the spot by obscuring the clear sky. In connection with this angle is a saloon with a dome-shaped roof, with windows on all sides so as to follow the circuit of the sun; in its wall, shelves are inserted, like those of a library, holding books of the kind that are not merely read but studied. Adjoining this is a sleeping-room, with a passage intervening, which is furnished with pipes underneath so as to circulate and supply the warm air which it collects at a wholesome temperature. The remainder of this wing serves for the accommodation of the slaves and freedmen, most of the rooms being so neat that they might be occupied by my visitors.

In the opposite wing there is a tastefully decorated saloon, and next to it what may be called either a large saloon or a moderate-sized dining parlour, which is brightened by a profusion of sunshine and an extensive sea-view: behind this a room with an anteroom, suitable for summer use owing to its height, and for winter from the manner in which it is protected, for it is out of reach of any wind. To this chamber another one with an anteroom is attached by a party-wall. Next comes the cooling room of the bath, spacious and wide, from the opposite walls of which two curved plunging-baths are thrown out, as it were, quite large enough when you remember that the sea is close by.* Adjoining this is the sweating and anointing room, and next to that the passage communicating with the bath-furnace, then two small apartments in

* That is, for those who wanted cold baths.

an elegant rather than costly style: in continuation is a splendid warm swimming-bath, from which the swimmers have a view of the sea; not far off is the tennis-court, which faces the warmest sun in the afternoon. Here a tower is erected with two sitting-rooms under it, and the same number in it, in addition to a dining-parlour which looks upon a broad expanse of sea and a long line of coast with charming villas. There is also a second tower, and in it a room which enjoys both the rising and setting sun: behind it a spacious storeroom and granary, and below a dining-room, which, when the sea is rough, is exposed only to its roar and its noise, and even that much subdued and but faintly heard. It looks upon the garden and the promenade which encloses the garden. This promenade is planted round with box, or with rosemary where the box fails; for box, when protected by buildings, grows freely; in the open air and exposed to the wind and the spray of the sea, even at a distance, it withers. Next to the promenade, in the inner circle which it forms, is a plantation of young vines, affording shade, and soft and yielding to walk in, even with bare feet. The garden is clothed with a number of mulberry-trees and fig-trees—trees which the soil hereabouts is particularly productive of, while it is unfavourable to other kinds. This is the prospect, no less agreeable than that of the sea, which is enjoyed from the dining-room out of sight of the sea. It has at its back two parlours whose windows command the vestibule, and another garden, a productive kitchen one. From this point run out some cloisters, almost important enough for a public construction. There are windows on both sides, but the greater number on that of the sea, those facing the garden being single ones, and fewer by the alternate corresponding windows, which are left out.*

* *Utrimque fenestrae, a mari plures, ab horto singulae, sed alternis pauciores.* Keil's conjecture "Utrimque . . . ab horto pauciores, sed alternis singulae," would be clearer. It seems probable that on the sea-side a line of windows extended along the whole range of the cloisters: towards

When the day is clear and still, all of them can be opened; when the wind blows on one side or the other, those on the side not exposed to the wind can be left open without inconvenience.*

In front of these cloisters is a terrace walk fragrant with violets. The cloisters increase, by their radiation, the warmth of the sun which strikes on them, and in like manner as they hold the sun, they also repel and ward off the north wind; so that the warmth which they give in front is equalled by the coolness they afford behind. In the same way they arrest the south-west wind, and thus, by means of one or other of their sides, they break the force of, and put an end to, winds coming from the most opposite quarters. These are the advantages of the cloisters in winter; in summer they are still greater. For before midday they keep cool the terrace walk, and in the afternoon the part of the promenade and the garden nearest them, by their shadow, which, according as the day increases or declines, falls longer and shorter on this side or on that. The cloisters themselves, however, are most free from sun when the sun strikes with its fiercest heat directly on their roof. Add to this that through their open windows the west winds are received and transmitted, so that they are never rendered unpleasant by closeness and want of circulation in the air.

At the end of the terrace is a chalet, which I am quite in love with—yes, literally in love with—for I built it myself. In it there is a sunny apartment which faces the terrace walk on one side and the sea on the other, and on both sides enjoys the sun; also an apartment with folding-doors which open on the cloisters, and a window towards the sea. In the middle of the wall there is a very tasteful recess, furnished with a glass partition and curtains, by

the garden, separate (*singulae*) windows were inserted in the wall, the blank space between them corresponding to an opposite window on the sea-side.

* When the north wind blew from the garden-side, the windows on that side would be shut, and those on the sea-side opened, and *vice versa*.

drawing or undrawing which you can either throw it into the apartment or shut it off. It has room for a couch and two seats. At your feet you have the sea, behind you the neighbouring villas, at your head the woods. Such is the variety of scenes, which may be viewed separately through as many windows, or blended in one. Next to this is a sleeping-room for the night, impervious to the voices of the slave-boys, the murmur of the sea, the raging of storms, the flash of the lightning, to the light of day even, unless the windows are opened. The cause of such deep and isolated seclusion is, that an intervening passage separates the wall of the bedroom from that which faces the garden, and so every sound is deadened by this empty space lying between the two. In connection with the sleeping-room is a small heating apparatus, through which the heat underneath is given out or retained, as occasion requires, by means of a little trap-door. Beyond this a bedroom with a dressing-room project towards the sun, catching it as soon as it rises, and retaining its rays—though they fall on it *obliquely*—at anyrate, retaining them, till after midday. On betaking myself to this chalet, it seems to me that I have got away even from my own villa, and I derive especial enjoyment from it at the time of the Saturnalia, while the other parts of the establishment are ringing with the license and the mirthful shouts of that season; for then I am no impediment to the gambols of my servants, nor are they to my studies.

Amidst all these conveniences and attractions there is a want of running water; but there are wells, or rather springs, for they are on the surface. Indeed, the character of this sea-coast is altogether remarkable; at whatever place you turn the soil, an immediate supply of water presents itself, quite pure, and not rendered in the slightest degree brackish by the immediate vicinity of the sea. The neighbouring woods furnish fuel in abundance; the rest of our supplies the town of Ostia finds us. Indeed, a man of moderate requirements might be sufficiently provided

even at the neighbouring village, which is separated from me by one gentleman's residence only. In this village there are three public baths, a great convenience whenever either an unexpected arrival, or want of time, prevents us from heating the bath at home. The coast is ornamented in the most pleasing variety by villa constructions, at one place continuous, at another detached, so as to present the appearance of a number of towns, whether you look at them from the sea or the shore itself. This last is often smooth after a long calm, but it is more often hardened by the constant beating of the waves upon it. The sea does not abound in choice fish, it is true, yet it yields excellent soles and lobsters.* My villa, however, furnishes inland produce as well, milk especially; for the cattle collect here from their pastures, whenever they are in search of water or shade.

Now, do I seem to you to have just cause for inhabiting this retreat, for making my home in it, and delighting in it? You are a perfect cockney if you are not eager to be here. Ah! and how I wish you *were* eager, that the charms so great and so numerous of my little villa might be further enhanced to the highest degree by your company!

(18.)

To Mauricus.

What more agreeable commission could I have received from you than that of looking out for a teacher for your brother's boys? For, by this kind act of yours, I am sent back to school myself, and am able, as it were, to resume that delightful age of youth. I sit among young people, as formerly,† and learn in addition how much consideration my pursuits ‡ give me in their eyes. For lately, in

* *Squilla* sometimes means a lobster or crayfish, as in Juv. v.; sometimes a prawn, as in Hor. Sat. ii. It may mean either here.

† It was a public teacher, to whose lectures he might send his nephews, that Mauricus required. Pliny accordingly attended several of their classes, in order to judge of their respective qualifications.

‡ *Studiis.* What he means by this modest word is his reputation for oratory, learning, &c.

a crowded lecture-room, some of them were talking out loud in the presence of a number of senators;* at my entrance they all held their tongues,—a circumstance which I should not relate if it did not redound to their credit more than my own, and if I did not wish you to entertain the hope that your nephews may attend the schools with advantage.† For the rest, when I have heard all the professors, you shall have in writing my opinion of each; and I will try and make you—as far, at least, as this can be accomplished in a letter—imagine that you yourself have heard them all. This zeal and fidelity I owe to you, and to the memory of your brother, particularly in a matter of such importance. For what can be of greater import to you than that these boys (I would say, of *yours*, but that now you love them more than if they were your own) should be found worthy of such a father as him, such an uncle as you!—an object of solicitude which, even if you had not enjoined it on me, I should have appropriated to myself. Not that I am unaware that many jealousies will have to be incurred by me in this matter of choosing a teacher: however, it is my duty to put up with such jealousies, and even with ill-will, on behalf of your nephews, as readily as parents do on behalf of their own children.

(19.)

To Cerealis.

You advise me to read my speech aloud to a party of friends. I will do so, because you advise it, though I have very strong doubts. One can't forget that speeches, when recited, lose all their spirit and fire, and almost the name of speeches, being productions which are favoured, as well as stimulated, by the assemblage of the judges, the crowd of assistants, the expectation of the issue, the

* Grown-up people often attended the classes of the more eminent lecturers.

† *Probe discere*, to attend the public lectures with no injury to their manners, &c.

reputation of more than one speaker, and the divided partialities of the audience. Add to this the speaker's gestures, his gait, his shiftings of position even, and the bodily animation corresponding to all the movements of the mind. The consequence is, that those who speak sitting, though they may enjoy in other respects nearly the same advantages as those who stand, yet, from this very circumstance that they are seated, are, as it were, debilitated and depressed. In the case of those indeed who recite, the chief aids to expression, the eyes and hands, are impeded: hence it is not to be wondered at that the attention of the audience languishes, when charmed from without by none of the graces, and roused by none of the stings of oratory. To this must be added that the oration to which I am referring is of a disputatious and argumentative character. Moreover, it is only natural to suppose that what we have written with pains will put the hearer to some pains as well. And, to be sure, how few hearers there are so unprejudiced as not to be pleased rather with those sweet and harmonious periods than with what is dry and concise? This divergence of taste is truly discreditable; yet it exists, since it generally happens that the audience requires one thing and the judges another, whereas, on the contrary, the hearer ought to be particularly affected by that which would move him most of all if he were himself in the position of a judge. Yet it may happen that, in spite of these difficulties, the originality of the work may recommend it: its originality, that is, in our country. The Greeks have a certain mode of treatment, which, though the converse of mine, is not altogether unlike it. For just as it was their custom, when they charged upon a new law that it conflicted with former laws, to establish this charge against it by a comparison of it with others, so in arguing that my contention was supported by the law against extortion, I had to collect this from the law itself, as also from others. This is a mode of treatment which, being anything but agreeable to

the ears of the ignorant, ought to obtain all the more favour from those who are instructed, in proportion as it obtains less from those who are not. However, if I decide to recite, I will take care to invite people of learning. But by all means weigh in your mind whether, with all this, there is still ground for reciting: dispose on either side these random reckonings of mine, and choose that to which reason inclines. For a reason is required of you; as for me, I shall find my excuse in having followed you.

(20.)

To Calvisius.

Get ready your copper, and here is a golden little story for you; stories rather—for this new one has reminded me of some older ones, nor does it matter which I choose to start with. Verania, the wife of Piso—I mean the Piso whom Galba adopted—lay seriously ill. Regulus called upon her. Consider, first, the impudence of the fellow in calling on a sick woman, when he had been the greatest enemy to her husband, and was extremely odious to herself. However, this might pass, if he had called merely. What did he do but actually seat himself close to her bed and interrogate her on the day and hour of her birth! As soon as he had been informed, he makes up his face, stares out of his eyes, wags his lips, sets his fingers in motion, calculates; no result! After keeping the poor lady a long while on the tenter-hooks of expectation, "You are," says he, "in a critical period; however, you will escape, and to make you more sure of this, I will consult a soothsayer whom I have frequently employed." No sooner said than done; he goes and offers a sacrifice, and declares that the entrails tally with the prognostics of the stars. With the usual credulity of persons who are in danger, she calls for her tablets and writes down a legacy for Regulus. Before long she grows worse, crying out with her dying breath upon the roguery and perfidy

of the fellow, and his worse than perjury, since he had forsworn himself to her by the life of his own son. Regulus does this frequently, and no less wickedly, since he is invoking the anger of the gods, whom he himself deceives daily, on the vicarious head of his unfortunate boy.

Velleius Blæsus, the wealthy man of consular rank, being at the point of death, was desirous of altering his will. Regulus, who had lately taken to toady him, hoped for something from a new disposition of property, so he began to exhort and to entreat the doctors to prolong by all means in their power the good gentleman's life. As soon as the will was executed, he changed his *rôle*, and reversing his tone, called out to the same doctors, "How long are you going on tormenting the poor man? Why grudge an easy death to one on whom you cannot bestow life?" Blæsus died, and, as though he had heard everything, left not a rap to Regulus.

Will these two stories do for you, or, after the fashion of the schools, do you call for a third?* Well, I have the materials. Aurelia, a lady of distinction, being about to execute her will, had clothed herself in her handsomest attire.† Regulus having come to attest it, said, "I beg you will leave me those clothes of yours." Aurelia thought the man was jesting, but he insisted seriously. To make a long story short, he compelled the lady to open her will and to bequeath to him the clothes she had on; he watched her as she was writing, and looked to see whether she had written the bequest. Aurelia, to be sure, is still alive, though *he* compelled her to do this, just as though she had been at the point of death. And he gets made heir at one time and receives legacies at another, just as if he deserved it all!

* This alludes to some practice in the schools with which we are unacquainted. Either discourses were commonly divided into three heads, or these were supported by three examples, or something analogous.

† The usual Roman practice on these occasions.

But why put myself to trouble in the case of a city in which, long since, roguery and dishonesty receive no less rewards, indeed greater ones, than honour and virtue? Look at Regulus, who from a poor and humble condition has advanced to such great wealth by his misdeeds, that he himself informed me of his consulting the omens as to how soon he should get up to sixty millions of sesterces,* and finding double entrails, which portended that he would become possessed of one hundred and twenty millions. And he will possess that sum too, if only he goes on as he has begun, dictating wills not really their own—the worst kind of fraud—to the very persons who make them.

* About £480,000 of our money.

BOOK III.

(1.)

To Calvisius.

I do not know that I have ever spent a more agreeable time than that lately passed by me in the company of Spurinna; so much so, indeed, that there is no man whom I would sooner take for my model in old age—provided always it be given me to grow old—for nothing can be better distributed than his mode of life. And for my part, just as the stars with their fixed course, so do the lives of men best please me when they are methodical, and this particularly in the case of old men. In young men a certain confusion as yet, and a certain disorder, so to speak, are not unbecoming: a general repose and regularity are suitable to age, a time when activity is out of date and ambition is discreditable. To this regularity Spurinna most steadfastly adheres; nay, more, he goes through a round of the following small occupations—that is, such as would be small if they were not done daily—in a kind of order, and, as it were, orbit. In the early morning he lies on his couch; at eight o'clock he calls for his shoes; then he walks three miles, exercising his mind all the time as well as his limbs. If friends are with him, there is conversation of a most elevated kind; if not, a book is read to him, and that, too, sometimes even when there are friends present, provided always it does not inconvenience them. Then he sits down, and there comes a book again, or conversation in preference to a book. Soon afterwards he steps into his carriage, taking with him his wife, a woman of a remarkable character, or else some one of his friends, as, for

instance, lately, myself. What a glorious, what a charming *tête-à-tête* it is! How much you learn in it of the old world! What deeds, what men you hear of! With what precepts are you imbued! though he has so tempered his modesty as never to appear to be teaching. Seven miles having been got over in this way, he again walks a mile, and once more sits down, or betakes himself to his sofa and his pen. For he writes lyrical poems with great skill, in Greek, too, as well as in Latin. There is a wonderful sweetness about them, a wonderful flavour and sauciness, and their charm is enhanced by the purity of the writer's own life. When the hour of the bath is announced (and this is three o'clock in winter, two o'clock in summer), he takes a turn without his clothes in the sun, if there be no wind. Then he plays energetically, and for a good while, at tennis; for this too is a kind of exercise with which he fights against old age. After his bath he lies down, and puts off dining for a short time. In the interval he has some light and amusing book read to him. During all this time his friends are at liberty either to do as he does, or, if they prefer it, to occupy themselves in some other way. Dinner is then put on the table, with as much good taste as simplicity, on a service of plain old silver. Vessels of Corinthian brass are in use too. These he delights in without being extravagantly addicted to them. The dinner is often accompanied at intervals by the performances of comedians,* that even our bodily pleasures may be seasoned by mental ones. He trenches somewhat upon the night, even in summer; but no one deems this tedious, with such courtesy is the entertainment protracted. From all this it results that, though he has completed his seventy-seventh year, he has the perfect use of his ears and eyes, with a frame active and full of vitality: his sagacity alone he owes to his age.

Such is the kind of life which I look forward to on my own account in wish and in thought, and which I shall enter on with the greatest eagerness so soon as a regard

* See Bk. i. Letter 15. These were probably in the nature of "readings."

for my advancing years shall permit me to sound the retreat. Meanwhile I am exhausted by a thousand labours, with respect to which this same Spurinna is at once my solace and my example. For he, too, as long as it became him, served offices, discharged public functions, governed provinces; and it was by hard work that he became entitled to this repose. I propose, then, to myself the same course as his and the same goal; and now at once enter into an engagement with you to that effect, so that if you should see me carried beyond the mark, you may call me to account on the strength of this letter, and bid me go into retirement when I shall be able to do so without incurring the charge of indolence.

(2.)

To Maximus.

What I should have voluntarily offered your friends, had I the same abundance of opportunities as yourself, I now think myself entitled to ask of you for *my* friends. Arrianus Maturus is a leading man at Altinum. When I say a leading man, I am not speaking of his means, which are large, but of his piety, his integrity, his respectability, his sagacity. He is one to whose judgment I resort in matters of business, as also to his taste in my literary pursuits, as being so greatly distinguished for his honesty, truthfulness, and intelligence. He loves me (there is no stronger expression) as you do. But he lacks ambition; consequently he has contented himself with the grade of a knight, though he might with ease rise to the highest rank. It must be my business, however, to see that he is advanced and honoured. It is therefore a great point with me to add somewhat to his position, without his expecting, without his knowing, or perhaps even desiring it; moreover, to add to it in a way which shall confer lustre without entailing trouble on him. The first time you have anything of this description at your disposal, please bestow

it on him. You will make him, as well as myself, your grateful debtor; for, though not seeking such favours, he receives them with as much gratitude as if he coveted them.

(3.)

To Corellia Hispulla.

I looked up to and loved (and I know not which was the stronger feeling) that most esteemed and virtuous man your father. And I have a singular regard for you for the sake of his memory, and on your own account. Hence it must necessarily follow that I should desire, and, indeed, as far as in me lies, I shall labour, that your son may turn out like his grandfather. His *maternal* grandfather would be my choice, though to be sure he has been favoured with one on the father's side who was also a distinguished and approved man. And his father, too, and his paternal uncle were men of note and of great reputation. *All* of whom he will grow up to resemble on one condition—that he be made to imbibe a liberal education; and it makes a vast difference from whom in particular he derives this education. As yet his boyish condition has confined him to your family circle; he has had tutors at home, where there is small opportunity, or even none at all, for going astray. Now, however, his studies must be carried forward outside your doors. Now is the time when we must look about for a Latin rhetoric professor of whose scholastic discipline and respectability, above all, of whose morality, we are assured. For our young friend, in addition to all the other gifts of nature and fortune, possesses remarkable personal beauty, in view of which, at his critical age, not a preceptor merely, but a guardian and governor is required.

Under these circumstances, I think I can point out to you Julius Genitor. I have a great esteem for him; yet my regard for the man does not prejudice my judgment, since it is the offspring of my judgment. He is a person of un-

blemished respectability, perhaps even a trifle too austere and blunt if we consider the looseness of our age. As to the value of his eloquence, there are many whose word you may take on that point, for his powers of speech, being evident and on the surface, are immediately perceived. The existence of man, however, conceals deep recesses and huge secret nooks, and on *this* head you must accept me as sponsor for Genitor. From this individual your son will hear nothing that will not be of advantage to him; he will learn nothing which it would be better not to have learnt, nor will he be less frequently reminded by Genitor than by you and by me of the ancestral effigies with which he is weighted, of the names, and the great names, he has to maintain. Accordingly, under favour of the gods, entrust him to a preceptor from whom he will learn morals first and afterwards eloquence, which, if morals are not taught with it, is learnt to small advantage.

(4.)

To Macrinus.

Though the friends who were by me, and also public report, seem to have approved of what I have done, yet I make a great point of learning *your* opinion. For as, before acting, I should have wished to seek your advice, so now that the matter is settled, I am particularly anxious to have your judgment on it.

During my absence in Tuscany, whither I had made an excursion for the purpose of inaugurating a public work at my own expense—having obtained leave of absence from my post of præfect of the Treasury—some envoys from the province of Bætica, who were about to enter a plaint on the subject of the administration of Cæcilius Classicus, applied to the Senate to have me for their advocate. My excellent colleagues, full of regard for me, began to talk of the engagements of our common office, and sought to make my excuses and get me off. The Senate passed a decree,

extremely flattering to me, to the effect that I should be appointed to defend the interests of the provincials, if they should first have obtained my personal consent. The envoys being again introduced, a second time demanded me (who was by this time present) for their advocate, imploring my assistance, which they had already enjoyed against Massa Bæbius, and alleging a compact on my part to defend their interests. The Senate received this with the loud applause * which usually preludes their decrees. Upon this I said, "Conscript Fathers, I cease to think that I have alleged any just grounds for excusing myself." The modesty of this speech and the way the thing was put were approved. I was urged, however, to this resolve of mine not merely by the unanimity of the Senate—though this had the greatest weight—but by other considerations, which, though of less, were still of some account. It occurred to my mind that our ancestors pursued the wrongs down even to individual friends, and that too by prosecutions voluntarily undertaken; hence I deemed it all the more disgraceful to neglect the duties imposed by a public connection. Moreover, when I recollected what were the actual dangers incurred by me on behalf of these same Bætici on the first occasion of my appearing for them, it seemed to me that the value of past obligations would be best preserved by the addition of new ones. Indeed things are so constituted that services of older date are cancelled if you do not heap fresh ones on them. For however often you may have obliged people, yet if you refuse them any one thing, this thing which you have refused is the only one which they will remember. I was further prevailed upon by the fact that Classicus was dead, and the consideration, which is generally the most painful in cases of this kind, removed—I mean the danger run by a senator. Hence I saw as the result of my advocacy no less success than if he had been alive, with the absence of all

* *Clarissima assensione.* Gierig takes *clarissima* to mean "most honorable to me." But the above sense seems to me simpler.

odium. To sum up, I reckoned that after discharging this office as much as three times, it would be more easy to excuse myself should any case occur in which it would not be becoming for me to prosecute; for as there must be some end or other to every kind of function, so ready submission is the best means of preparing the way for a grant of release.

You have heard the motives of my resolution. It remains to hear your opinion one way or the other; as to which, plain-spokenness in your dissent will be not less agreeable to me than the authority of your approval.

(5.)

To Bæbius Macer.

I am much pleased at your being so diligent a student of my uncle's books that you wish to have them all, and inquire the names of all. I will fill the part of a catalogue, and will further inform you of the order in which they were written; this also being a kind of information not unwelcome to the studious. "On Cavalry Javelin-Exercise, in one book." This he wrote, with as much ability as care, during his campaigns as commander of the allied cavalry. "The Life of Pomponius Secundus, in two books," a man who had cherished a singular regard for him, so that in this work he discharged, as it were, a duty which he owed to the memory of his friend. "The German Wars, in twenty books," in which he collected all the wars which we have waged with the Germans. This he commenced during a campaign in Germany, by admonition of a dream. During his sleep there stood by him the form of Drusus Nero (who, after triumphing far and wide over the Germans, died in their country), commending his memory to my uncle, and entreating the latter to rescue him from unmerited oblivion. "The Student, in three books," divided into six volumes on account of their length, in which the orator is trained from his very cradle and perfected. "On Doubtful Phraseology, in eight

books." He wrote this under Nero, in the last years of his reign, when every kind of literary pursuit which was in the least independent or elevated had been rendered dangerous by servitude. "A Continuation of Aufidius Bassus, in thirty-one books." "Natural History, in thirty-seven books," a work of great compass and learning, and no less varied than nature itself.

You are astonished that a busy man should have completed such a number of volumes, many of them on such intricate subjects; you will be still more astonished when you learn that for a considerable time he practised at the bar, that he died in his fifty-sixth year, and that between these two periods he was much distracted and hindered, partly by the discharge of important offices, and partly by his intimacy with the emperors. But his was a piercing intellect, an incredible power of application, an extraordinary faculty of dispensing with sleep. He began to work by candlelight at the feast of Vulcan, not with the view of seizing an auspicious occasion, but for the purpose of study immediately after midnight; in winter, indeed, at one o'clock in the morning, or at the latest at two, often at midnight.* To be sure sleep came to him very easily, overtaking him at times, or leaving him, even in the midst of his studies. Before daybreak he used to repair to the Emperor Vespasian (who as well as himself worked by night), and after that to his official duties. On his return home, he gave the rest of his time to study. After partaking in the course of the day of a light and digestible † meal in the

* The Vulcanalia were on the 23d of August. "It was customary on this day to commence working by candlelight, which was probably considered as an auspicious beginning of the use of fire, as the day was sacred to the god of this element" (Dict. G. and R. Antiquities). The elder Pliny, we are led to suppose, did not, like other students, observe this practice once, and then leave it off. He commenced his studies by candlelight on this day, as being a convenient date, and so continued them.

As the Romans divided the daylight, whether long or short, into twelve equal hours, and similarly the night, it is obvious that the hours (*septima*, *octava*, &c.) would vary, and the translations "one o'clock," "two o'clock," in the text are merely given for the sake of convenience.

† *Facilem*, sc. *ad concoquendum*. Messrs. Prichard and Bernard (Selected

old-fashioned style, he would often in summer, if he had any spare time, lie in the sun, when a book was read to him, of which he made notes and extracts. Indeed, he read nothing without making extracts; he used even to say that there was no book so bad as not to contain *something* of value. After his sunning he commonly took a cold bath; then he lunched* and went to sleep for a very short time. Shortly afterwards, as though he were beginning a fresh day, he studied on till dinner-time. At this meal a book was read out and passing comments made upon it. I remember that one of his friends, on the reader mispronouncing some words, stopped him and made him repeat them, upon which my uncle said, "Surely you understood him?" His friend said, "Yes." "Why then did you stop him? We have lost more than ten verses by this interruption of yours." So parsimonious was he of his time.

In summer he rose from dinner by daylight; in winter before seven,† as though constrained by some law. Such was his life in the midst of his avocations and the bustle of the city. In the country, only his bathing-time was exempted from study. When I say bathing, I am speaking of the actual bath inside, for while he was being rubbed and dried he was read to or dictated. When travelling, as though freed from every other care, he devoted himself to study alone. At his side was a secretary,‡ with a book and tablets, whose hands were protected in winter by gloves, so that not even the rigour of the season might rob my uncle of any time for study; for which reason, in Rome, too, he used to be carried in a sedan. I remember being reproved by him for taking a walk. "You might,"

Letters of Pliny) take it as "simple, easy to be got, not dear," quoting Petronius 93. Burmann on this passage of Petronius gives other examples. But this sense does not seem quite so suitable here, and the word will clearly bear the other one.

* *Gustabat.* The French have preserved this term in their "*goûter*," which, if we take *cena* as "supper," would correspond somewhat to our "tea."

† In the dead of the winter, before about half-past seven. See note above.

‡ Or shorthand writer—*notarius*

said he, "have avoided wasting those hours." For he thought all time wasted which was not employed in study. By dint of this intense application he completed all those numerous volumes, and left me one hundred and sixty books of "selections," written on both sides of the parchment and in an extremely small hand, which makes their number really much larger. He used to relate himself that when he was procurator in Spain he might have sold these books to Largius Licinus for four hundred thousand sesterces,* and at that time there were rather fewer of them.

Does it not seem to you, when you recollect how much he read and how much he wrote, that he could never have been engaged in any public offices or in attendance on the sovereign? And, on the other hand, when you hear how laboriously he toiled at his studies, would you not think that he neither wrote nor read enough? For what is there that would not be impeded by such occupations as his? On the other hand, what is there that could not be accomplished by such unflagging industry? Hence I am in the habit of laughing when some folks call me studious, who if compared with him am the idlest of the idle. *I* only, do I say, distracted as I am partly by public calls, partly by those of friendship? Why, who of those who devote their whole lives to letters, when compared with him, will not have to blush as a sluggard and a trifler?

I have extended my letter, though proposing originally to give you the required information only, the names of the books he had left behind. Yet I am confident that all this additional matter will prove as acceptable to you as the books themselves, since it may incite you, by the stimulus of emulation, not merely to read them, but to elaborate something of the same kind yourself.

* About £3200.

(6.)

To Annius Severus.

Out of a legacy that fell to me I bought lately a figure of Corinthian brass, which, though small, is spirited and bold, as far as my taste goes; which taste, perhaps, in all matters, and assuredly in this one, is of infinitesimal value. However, this is a figure which even *I* can appreciate; for it is nude, so that its defects, if it has any, are not concealed, and its merits are fully brought to view. It represents an old man standing: bones, muscles, sinews, veins, wrinkles even, appear as of one breathing, the hair is scanty and retreating from the brow, the forehead broad, the face shrivelled, the neck thin, the arms droop, the breasts are flat, the belly is drawn in. The back exhibits the same age, as far as a back can. The brass itself, to judge from its colour, which is of the right sort, must be antique. In short, everything about it is of a character to arrest the eyes of an artist, as well as to delight those who are not connoisseurs. And this it was which tempted such a tyro as myself to the purchase. However, I have bought it, not to place in my house (where up to this time I have never had anything in the way of Corinthian brasses), but for the purpose of setting it up in my native parts in some frequented place, and for preference in the temple of Jupiter; for it seems an offering worthy of a temple and worthy of a god. Will you, then, with your usual attention to my commissions, undertake to see to this, and at once order a pedestal to be made, of any kind of marble you please, to contain my name and titles, if you think the latter should be added? I will send you the figure itself as soon as I can find some one who will not be incommoded by it, or (which you would prefer) will bring it with me in person. For I propose: if, that is, the circumstances of my office permit of it: to take a trip into your neighbourhood. You are pleased at my promising to come, but you will

make a wry face when I add that it will only be for a few days, for the same causes which prevent my starting just yet will prevent my being absent for a longer time.

(7.)

To Caninius Rufus.

News has lately come of Silius Italicus having put an end to his life by starvation, at his place near Naples. The incentive to death was the state of his health. An incurable swelling had appeared on his person, wearied with which he hastened to die, with a resolution not to be diverted from its purpose. He was blessed by fortune and happy down to his last day, except that he lost the younger of his two children; yet the elder and the better of the two he left behind him in prosperous circumstances, indeed in the position of a consular.* He had injured his reputation under Nero, when he was believed to have played the accuser officiously; but, as a friend of Vitellius, he had conducted himself wisely and in a popular way. He had brought back with him great repute from his administration of Asia, and had effaced the stain of his old industry † by a life of laudable repose. He was among the chief men of the state, possessing no power and arousing no hostility. He had many visitors and much attention shown him; and, reclining a good deal on a couch in his apartment—always a resort for company, though not from regard to his fortunes ‡—he passed the days in learned discourse, when he had leisure from writing. He wrote poems with more pains than genius, and occasionally tested the taste of the public by reciting them. In the

* *Consularis*, elsewhere translated "of consular rank," meant, originally, one who had served the office of consul. Under the Empire it was an honorary title, conferred on others as well.

† *Industria.* The French "industrie" exactly renders this, for which we have no exact word in English: "industry" hardly expressing it. His acting as accuser under Nero is referred to.

‡ *Fortuna* must be taken generally, not of mere wealth. He was visited for his own sake, not courted as a man possessing great power, for he had none.

end, influenced by his years, he retired from Rome and confined himself to Campania, nor was he drawn thence even by the accession of a new emperor. Great credit is due to Cæsar, under whom it was free to him to act thus, and to *him* also for daring to profit by this freedom.* He was a collector,† to such an extent as to be chargeable with a mania for buying. He had several villas in the same places, and, as soon as he had conceived an affection for the new ones, used to neglect the old. He had everywhere a quantity of books and statues and busts, which last he not only possessed but actually worshipped, that of Virgil above all others, whose birthday he used to celebrate more religiously than his own, particularly at Naples, where he was wont to repair to his tomb as to a temple.

In this condition of repose he outlived his seventy-fifth year, being of a delicate rather than an infirm constitution. As he was the last consul made by Nero, so he was the last to die of all those whom Nero had made consuls. And this, too, is remarkable: the last to die of Nero's consuls was the man in whose consulship Nero himself perished. When recalling this, I am seized with pity for the transient condition of humanity. For what can be so circumscribed, so short, as the life of man at its longest? Does it not seem to you as if Nero had existed quite lately? And yet, in the interval, of those who filled the consulship under him, not one is now remaining. Yet why be surprised at this? L. Piso (father of the Piso who was slain in Africa by the atrocious act of Valerius Festus) used to say lately that he saw no one in the senate to whom, during his own consulship, he had put the question from the chair. By such narrow bounds is the existence of such a multitude‡ compassed, that, to my mind, those royal tears we have heard of deserve not only for-

* It was the etiquette for a man in his position to proceed to Rome and pay his respects to the new emperor.

† Φιλόκαλος, lit., "a lover of beautiful objects."

‡ The senate at this time appears to have contained about six hundred members.

giveness but even commendation. For they say that Xerxes, when he had cast his eyes over his immense army, wept at the thought that so speedy an end awaited so many thousands. But so much the rather, with regard to this our portion, whatever it may be, of poor fleeting time, if we do not allot it to deeds (for the opportunity for these is in other hands than ours *), let us at any rate prolong it by our studies. And inasmuch as length of life is denied us, let us leave something behind to prove that we have lived. I know you require no stimulus. Yet my regard for you causes me to prick you on, even when you are going your best pace, just as you do to me. 'Tis a goodly strife when friends, with mutual exhortations, take their turn at inciting each other to a love of immortality.

(8.)

To Suetonius Tranquillus.

You are acting agreeably to the respect which you always show me, in asking me so earnestly to transfer the tribuneship,† obtained by me for you, from that distinguished man Neratius Marcellus, to your kinsman Cæsennius Silvanus. For my part, as it would have been extremely agreeable to me to see you a tribune, so it will be not less pleasing to see another in that position through your instrumentality. Indeed, it would not, as I think, be consistent to wish to advance a man in honour, and yet to deny him the glory to be derived from the exercise of affection, a glory which is nobler than all honours. I perceive, too, that, admirable as it is to deserve favours as well as to bestow them, you will achieve both kinds of credit at one and the same time, by handing over to another what you yourself have merited. Moreover, I observe that it will redound to *my* glory as well, if, by this action of yours, it shall become known that my friends can not only be invested with tribuneships, but even

* In the hands of the gods.

† A military tribuneship.

give them away. So for my part I conform to this most laudable desire of yours. And to be sure your appointment is not yet confirmed, so that it is in my power to substitute the name of Silvanus for yours; and I hope your favour will be as agreeable to him as mine is to you.

(9.)

To Cornelius Minicianus.

I can now write you in full of the great exertions undergone by me in the state trial instituted by the province of Bætica; for it involved many points and required frequent pleadings, presenting much variety. Whence this variety? Whence these numerous pleadings? Cæcilius Classicus, a detestable man, practising no concealment in his guilt, discharged the proconsulship in that province, with as much lawlessness as low avarice, the same year that Marius Priscus was in Africa. Now Priscus came from Bætica, and Classicus from Africa. Hence a saying of the Bætici, and one not devoid of humour, was in circulation—for misery, too, will sometimes make people witty—"I have bestowed one plague, and received another." But Marius was accused by only one city publicly, and by a number of private individuals; whereas Classicus was attacked by a whole province. The prosecution was anticipated by his death, which was either casual or the result of his own act; for though it was unfavourably spoken of it remained a matter of doubt. Indeed, while it seemed likely that he should have wished to lay down his life since he could offer no defence, it seemed equally strange that a man should, by death, have escaped the shame of being condemned, who had felt no shame in committing actions worthy of condemnation. None the less did the Bætici persist in accusing him, even after he was deceased. There was a legal provision to this effect, though it had fallen into disuse, and after a long interval it was again applied in this case. They went still further,

and included in the accusation the accomplices and agents of Classicus, demanding an inquiry into their conduct and giving their names.

I appeared for the Bætici, and with me was Lucceius Albinus, a fluent and graceful speaker, a man for whom I had long felt a regard that was mutual, and towards whom, owing to our association in this affair, I have begun to cherish an ardent affection. Glory carries with it, especially in mental pursuits, a certain "unsociableness;" * yet between us there was no conflict, no contention, each exerting himself as an equal yoke-fellow, not on his own behalf, but on that of the cause, whose importance and interests seemed to demand that we should not take upon us to deal with so weighty a matter in a single speech a-piece. We feared that daylight, that our voices, that our strength might fail us, if we tied up so many charges, so many accused persons, in one bundle as it were. Further, that the attention of the judges might be not only weakened but actually confused by the multitude of names and cases. Again, that the interests possessed by individuals, when thus conjoined in a lump, might lead to each individual obtaining the advantage of the whole. Lastly, that the most influential personages, by offering up the meanest of the lot as a kind of scapegoat, might slip off under cover of other folks' punishment. For assuredly favour and intrigue are most certain to prevail when they can shelter themselves under a specious appearance of severity. We remembered the example given by Sertorius, who ordered the strongest and the weakest soldier to pull at the tail of a horse—you know the rest; for we, too, saw that so numerous an array of accused could only be got the better of, on condition of being attacked singly.

We determined to start with proving the guilt of Classicus himself; from this the transition was most natural to his accomplices and agents, since they could not be proved to be such, unless *he* were guilty. Of this

* Ἀκοινώνητον.

number, we at once tacked on two to Classicus, Bæbius Probus and Fabius Hispanus, both strong men in point of interest, Hispanus also in point of eloquence. As to Classicus, indeed, our work was short and easy. He had left in writing, under his own hand, what he had received from every transaction and from every cause; he had even sent letters to Rome to a certain mistress of his, boasting and bragging in these very words, "Hurrah! hurrah! I come to you a *free* * man, having already realised four millions of sesterces,† by a sale of a portion of the Bætici."‡ With regard to Hispanus and Probus, we had a great deal of trouble. Before entering upon their crimes, I thought it necessary to labour the point of demonstrating that agency was a criminal offence, since if I had not established this it would have been useless to prove that they were agents; for the defence set up for them was, not a denial of the charges, but a plea for allowance on the ground of compulsion. They were provincials, they said, and were compelled by fear to obey all the proconsul's orders. Claudius Restitutus, who replied to me, a practiced and wary advocate, and one who is prepared for every emergency, however unexpected, constantly says that never in his life was he so mystified and perplexed as when he saw his defence forestalled and robbed of the very points on which he placed all his reliance. The result of our joint conduct of the case was this: the senate decided that the property possessed by Classicus, before going to his province, should be separated from the remainder and be handed over to his daughter; the rest to go to those who had been despoiled. It was further added that the monies he had paid his creditors should be refunded by them. Hispanus and Probus were banished for five years. So serious did those crimes of theirs appear, about which at the outset doubts were entertained whether they were crimes at all.

* *I.e.*, free from debt.

† About £32,000.

‡ *Parte vendita Bæticorum*,—by a sale of false judgments, and unjust sentences passed on them.

After a few days, we put in accusation Cluvius Fuscus, a son-in-law of Classicus, and Stilonius Priscus, who had been tribune of a cohort under Classicus, with different results, Priscus being banished * from Italy for two years, and Fuscus acquitted. In our third suit, we thought it the most convenient course to proceed against several persons collectively, lest, if the inquiry were further protracted, the impartiality and strictness of the judges might become relaxed through satiety and disgust as it were. And, besides, there remained certain less important defendants who had been expressly reserved for this stage, with the exception, however, of Classicus's wife, as to whom, though she was involved in suspicions, yet it was thought there were not enough proofs to convict her. For with regard to Classicus's daughter, who was also among the defendants, not even suspicions attached to her. So on coming to her name in the last suit (for towards the end of the proceedings we had not to fear, as we should have done at the beginning, that such a course might weaken the force of the entire accusation), I deemed it the most honourable plan not to press on an innocent person, and I said this frankly and in various ways. On one occasion I asked the agents of the province whether they could furnish me with any instructions such as they were confident could be confirmed by proofs; another time I requested the advice of the senate whether, supposing me to possess some powers of oratory, they were of opinion that I ought to aim a kind of weapon, so to speak, at the throat of an innocent person. In the end, I summed up the whole subject in these concluding words: "Some one will perhaps say, 'Do you, then, constitute yourself a judge?' I, indeed, am not judging; but I remember that I was assigned as an advocate from among those who are judges."

The end of this cause, to which so many persons were parties, was that some were acquitted, and a greater number

* *Prisco Italia interdictum.* See Letter ii. 11, note.

convicted and further banished, either for a term or for life. By the same decree of the senate, our assiduity and integrity and intrepidity were attested with the fullest acknowledgments, a meet reward of our great exertions, and the only one that could compensate for them. You can imagine how tired we are, after having had to speak so often, and so often to altercate,* to interrogate, to come to the rescue of, to refute such a number of witnesses. Then see how difficult and troublesome it was merely to turn a deaf ear to the private solicitations of the defendants' friends, and to bear up against their open opposition. I will just relate one thing of those I said. On one of the judges interrupting me with a reclamation on behalf of a defendant, who enjoyed great interest, "The man," said I, "will be none the less innocent if I say all I have to say." † You will conjecture from this what controversies, what angry feelings even, we had to put up with, at any rate for a short time. For integrity, though at the actual time it offends those to whose wishes it is opposed, yet in the sequel is honoured and praised by these identical people.

I have introduced you to the scene to the best of my ability. You will say, "It was not worth while. What have I to do with such a long letter?" Well, then, don't you keep asking what is going on in Rome. And yet remember that a letter is not a long one which embraces so many days and trials, so many defendants in short, and so many cases; all of which I fancy I have set forth as concisely as carefully. Yet I was hasty in saying "carefully;" something occurs to me which I had passed over, and that, too, somewhat late. Nevertheless, though out

* We have no word for *altercor*. "To strive to gain the victory over an opponent in a court of justice by putting questions for him to answer" (Riddle and White). The *altercatio* is described by Quintilian, vi. 4; and we have a specimen of it in Cicero *ad Att.*, i. 16.

† This is taken in two ways. "The man is sure not to be convicted, whatever I may say," or, "If the man is really innocent, my telling my story won't make him the less so." The latter is better. However, I do not see why Pliny may not have had both meanings in his mind.

of its order, you shall have it. Homer does this kind of thing, and a good many others on the strength of his example, and it is mighty graceful in other ways. However, it is not on these accounts that I do it.

One of the witnesses, either angry at having been subpœna'd against his will, or else suborned by one or other of the defendants with the view of disarming the accusation, impeached Norbanus Licinianus, an agent of the province and solicitor for the prosecution, on a charge of collusion in the case of Casta (this was the wife of Classicus). It is a maxim of our law that the case of the person on trial shall first be completed, and *then* the question of collusion be inquired into; evidently because the honesty of a prosecutor is best judged of from the course of the prosecution itself. In the instance of Norbanus, however, neither the order prescribed by law, nor the name of agent and office of solicitor, were any protection to him: such a blaze of odium enveloped the man, who, besides being otherwise infamous, had made his profit, as many did, out of Domitian's times, and who had been selected on this occasion by the province as their solicitor, not for his respectability and integrity, but for his enmity to Classicus, by whom he had been banished. He requested to have a day named for the inquiry, and that the charges against him should be formulated; but he obtained neither request, and was compelled to reply on the spot. He did reply,—the bad, vicious character of the man makes me doubt whether I should say with impudence, or with firmness, certainly with great readiness. Many charges were brought against him which did him more harm than that of collusion. Moreover, two men of consular rank, Pomponius Rufus and Libo Frugi, damaged him by their evidence to the effect that he had assisted the accusers of Salvius Liberalis in open court in Domitian's time. He was found guilty and banished to an island. So, when I came to prosecute Casta, there was no point which I pressed more than this one, that her accuser had been con-

victed of collusion. However, I pressed it to no purpose, for a result followed which was self-contradictory and novel; the accuser having been found guilty of collusion, the defendant was acquitted. You ask what we did during this affair of Norbanus.* We submitted to the senate that we had been instructed by him in the matter of the state trial, and that we ought to be furnished with an entirely fresh set of instructions if he were proved to have acted in collusion; accordingly, while his case was being proceeded with, we remained in our seats. After this, Norbanus was present each day at the principal trial and persevered with the same resolution, or else impudence, to the very end.

I ask myself whether I have again omitted anything, and again an omission has nearly occurred. On the last day, Salvius Liberalis strongly inveighed against the remaining agents, on the ground that they had not brought to trial all those whom the province had charged them to prosecute; and by his usual force and eloquence he involved them in some risk. I came to the aid of these men, who are not only very worthy but also very grateful persons; at any rate they say publicly that they owe their escape from such a storm to me. This shall be the end of my epistle, really and truly the end. I won't add a single letter, even though I should still feel that something has been passed over.

(10.)

To Vestricius Spurinna and Cottia.

I did not tell you, during my recent visit to you, that I had composed something on your son: first of all, because I had not written with the object of mentioning it, but with that of satisfying my affection and my grief; and

* *Dum haec aguntur*, evidently refer to the episode of Norbanus. What he has said about his course on the prosecution of Casta has been inserted parenthetically and in anticipation.

next, because I believed that you, Spurinna, when you had heard of my reciting (as you yourself told me was the case) had heard at the same time what was the subject of my recitation. Besides, I feared to upset you, in the midst of festal days, by leading you back to a remembrance of your poignant sorrow. Even now, there is some hesitation on my part whether to forward you, at your particular request, that portion only which was recited by me, or to add to it what I meditate reserving for a fresh volume. It does not, I must tell you, suffice to my affection to do honour to a memory so beloved and so sacred in a single poor book; it would be more to the interest of his fame that it should be distributed and made the subject of several compositions. However, in this my hesitation whether to send you all that I have already composed, or as yet to withhold a portion, it seemed the franker and more friendly course to send all, particularly as you assure me that you will keep it to yourselves till I have decided about publishing. It remains for me to ask you, in case you think any additions, changes, or omissions should be made, to indicate them to me with a like frankness. It is difficult, I know, to put such a strain on the mind in the midst of sorrow,—very difficult. Yet, just as you would advise a sculptor or a painter, who should be producing a likeness of your son, of the points to be brought out or altered, so I pray you to direct and guide me, who am striving to execute no mere fragile and fleeting portrait, but (as you suppose) an imperishable one—one which at any rate will live the longer, the truer, the better, the more finished it is.

(II.)

To Julius Genitor.

Our dear Artemidorus is altogether of such a kindly nature that he exaggerates the services of his friends. Hence, among others, a favour done him by myself is

circulated by him with encomiums which, though genuine, are above its value. To be sure, after the banishment of the philosophers from Rome,* I went to see him at his house in the suburbs, and what made the thing more subject to remark, in other words more dangerous, was the fact that I was prætor at the time. Moreover, I advanced to him without interest (though I had to borrow it myself) a considerable sum of money, which he required for the purpose of discharging debts contracted by him under the most honourable circumstances—while some of his great and wealthy friends were hemming and hawing over it. And this I did when seven of my friends had been either put to death or banished—Senecio, Rusticus and Helvidius had been put to death; Mauricus, Gratilla, Arria and Fannia had been banished—and when scorched, as it were, by so many thunderbolts falling around me, I augured from certain sure signs that the same destruction was impending over myself. Yet I do not on this account consider that I deserved any extraordinary credit, as he sets forth, but simply that I avoided disgracing myself; for not only did C. Musonius, his father-in-law, inspire me with a regard mingled with admiration (as far as difference of ages permitted), but this very Artemidorus was cherished by me in the closest bonds of friendship, as long ago as when I was soldiering in Syria, in the capacity of tribune. And the first token of some good natural disposition that I showed was the fact that I was seen to appreciate a man, who was either a sage or else approximated to and closely resembled one; for of all those who now-a-days style themselves philosophers, you will hardly find here and there one so thoroughly honest and genuine. I say nothing of the bodily endurance with which he bears the cold of winter equally with the heat of summer, or of how he recoils before no exertions, how neither in his food nor in his drink does he allow any part to sensual enjoyment, how he is master of his eyes and his emotions. Great

* By Domitian.

qualities these: in any other man, that is to say: in *his* case, of small account, if they be compared with his other virtues, which were such as to merit his being chosen by C. Musonius as his son-in-law in preference to various suitors of various ranks. When I recall these things, it is certainly gratifying to me that he heaps such praises on me in your hearing and that of others; yet I fear he will exceed the mark, which his kindly nature (I return, you see, to my starting-point) does not in general confine itself to. For though in other respects a most sagacious man, there is just one mistake that he falls into—an honourable one, still a mistake: he values his friends more highly than they deserve.

(12.)

To Catilius Severus.

I will come to your dinner, but must start with bargaining that it be a short and homely one, abounding in Socratic discourses only, and even as to them preserving a mean. There will be callers abroad before daylight,* such as even Cato could not stumble on with impunity, albeit C. Cæsar censures him in such a way as to praise him. For he relates how those whom Cato encountered, when they had uncovered his tipsy head, blushed, adding, "You would think, not that Cato had been caught in the act by them, but they by Cato." What greater estimation could be accorded him than to think him so venerable even in his cups. However, in our dinner let a limit of time be observed, as well as of service and expense. *We*, at any rate, are not such as even enemies cannot find fault with without praising them at the same time.

* *Officia antelucana*, "visits of ceremony taking place before daylight." "Take care," says Pliny, "that our meal is not protracted till such a time that we shall risk falling in with parties of clients, &c., going to pay their morning visit of ceremony to their patrons and great friends, and who will discover us to have taken more than is good for us. Cato it is true (as related by Cæsar) did this, &c.; but we are not precisely Catos."

(13.)

To Voconius Romanus.

I forward you, at your particular request, the speech in which I lately returned thanks to our excellent prince, in my capacity of consul. I should have forwarded it just the same, if you had not made the request. With regard to this production, pray consider not only the pleasing character of the subject, but also its difficulties. For, while in the case of other subjects, their very novelty keeps the reader attentive; as to this one, everything has been made known, published, said over and over again. The consequence is that the reader, grown in a manner indolent and careless, is free to attend to the mode of expression only, a point in which it is very difficult to give satisfaction, when it is the only one that is made the subject of criticism. And I would that the arrangement at least, and the transitions and the figures of speech, were equally attended to; for brilliancy of invention and grandeur of diction are to be found sometimes even among the untutored; whereas harmony in arrangement and variety in ornamentation are in the power of the learned only. Nor indeed is a high and lofty tone always to be aimed at: just as, in a picture, nothing so much sets off light as shade; so it is proper to lower as well as to raise the tone of an oration. But why all this to a man of your learning? Rather let me say this: note what you think ought to be corrected; for I shall be the more ready to think that you like the other parts, on being informed that there are some parts which you dislike.

(14.)

To Acilius.

An atrocious business this—and one deserving a better record than a mere letter—the treatment which Largius

Macedo, a man of prætorian rank, has suffered at the hands of his slaves. He was in general a haughty and cruel master, and one who did not sufficiently remember that his own father had been in a servile condition, or rather who remembered it too well. He was bathing at his villa near Formiæ, when all of a sudden his slaves surrounded him: one sprang at his throat, another struck him on the face, a third inflicted blows on his chest and belly, and even, horrible to relate, on other parts of his frame. When they thought the breath was out of him, they threw him on the hot pavement, to ascertain whether he was still alive. On seeing him extended without motion—either because he was really senseless, or else pretended to be so—they were satisfied that they had done for him. Then, at last, they carried him out, under pretence that he had been suffocated by the heat. His more confidential servants received the body, and his mistresses ran up with wailings and shrieks. Whereupon, roused by the sound of voices, and refreshed by the coolness of the place, he showed that he was alive—he could do it safely now—by opening his eyes and by the movements of his body. The slaves fled, of whom the greater number have been arrested, and the remainder are being searched for. He himself, having been nursed with difficulty for some days, died, not without the satisfaction of seeing them punished, for he was avenged during his lifetime as persons usually are after they have been slain.

You see to what a number of dangers and affronts and mockeries we are exposed; nor has any one reason to feel secure on the ground of being easy-going and indulgent, for masters are assassinated, not upon a judgment of their conduct, but from sheer wickedness. However, so much for this. What is there further in the way of news? What? Why nothing, else I would add it; for there is still room left on my paper, and moreover to-day, being a holiday, would allow of my stringing together more matter. I will just add what opportunely occurs to me in relation

to this same Macedo. As he was once bathing at the public baths in Rome, a remarkable, and indeed, as the event showed, ominous circumstance occurred to him. A Roman knight, whom Macedo's slave had requested, by a slight touch of the hand, to allow him to pass, turned round and struck with his open palm, not the slave by whom he had been touched, but Macedo himself, with such force that he nearly knocked him down. So the bath, as it were, by a kind of gradation, was first a scene of affront and afterwards of death to him.

(15.)

To Silius Proculus.

You ask me to read your short productions in the retirement of the country, and to examine whether they are worth publishing. You employ prayers and you allege an authority; for while you beg me to subtract some odd hours from my literary pursuits and bestow them on yours, you add that M. Tullius * was wonderfully kind in encouraging poetical dispositions. But neither prayers nor exhortations are required by me. Not only do I entertain a most religious veneration for the poetic art itself, but also a very strong regard for you. What you desire, then, shall be done, with as much diligence as good will. Even now I think I may write back that your work is pleasing, and one that should not be suppressed, as far as it was possible to judge by the portions of it which you recited in my presence; that is to say, if your recitation did not impose on me, for you read in a most charming and accomplished way. Yet I am confident of not being so led by the ears as that all the sharpness of my judgment is deadened by what captivates *them*. It may possibly be blunted and a trifle dulled, yet it can't be altogether eradicated and wrested from me. So I can pronounce, even

* Cicero.

now, without rashness on your production as a whole; as to the parts I will judge of them by a perusal of them.

(16.)

To Nepos.

I seem to have observed, with regard to the actions and utterances of distinguished men and women, that the most famous are not always the greatest.* This opinion of mine has been confirmed by what I heard from Fannia yesterday. The lady is a granddaughter of the celebrated Arria, who was not only the solace of her husband in death, but herself set him the example of dying. She related many traits of her grandmother, not inferior to this action, though less known; and I am of opinion that they will appear as admirable to you when you read of them as they did to me on hearing of them.

Cæcina Pætus, her husband, lay sick, and her son lay sick too, both of them, as it seemed, to the death. The son died, a youth of remarkable beauty, and as modest as he was beautiful, one not less endeared to his parents by other considerations, than by the fact of his being their son. She made arrangements for his funeral, and conducted his obsequies in such a way that her husband knew nothing of the matter. Nay more, whenever she entered his bed-room, she pretended that their son still lived, and even that he was somewhat easier, and upon his frequently inquiring what the boy was doing she would answer, "He has had a good sleep. He has taken food with appetite." After this, as her tears, long restrained, were getting the better of her and breaking forth, she would leave the room. Then she abandoned herself to her grief. When she had wept her full she would return, her eyes dried, her features composed, as though she had left

* *Alia clariora esse alia majora*, literally, "that some are more celebrated and others greater."

her condition of bereavement outside the door. Glorious, indeed, was the conduct of this same lady when she drew the steel and plunged it into her bosom and, extracting the dagger and handing it to her husband, added those immortal and well-nigh divine words, "Pætus, it gives no pain!" And yet, when she acted and spoke thus, glory and enduring fame were before her eyes. How much nobler a thing it was, with no prize of enduring fame or of glory in view, to hide her tears, to veil her grief, to go on playing the part of mother when her son was gone!

Scribonianus had taken up arms against Claudius in Illyricum. Pætus had sided with him, and (Scribonianus having been killed) was being dragged a prisoner to Rome. He was about to embark on board ship, when Arria entreated the soldiers that she might be allowed to embark with him. "Surely," said she, "you are going to allow a man of consular rank some servant-lads to hand him his food, to help him on with his clothes and his shoes! *I* will do everything for him single-handed." Failing to obtain her request, she hired a fishing-smack, and followed the huge vessel in her tiny craft. The same lady said to the wife of Scribonianus, who had turned informer, upon the hearing before Claudius, "Can I listen to you when Scribonianus was killed on your bosom, and yet you live!" from which it is plain that the design of her glorious death was no sudden one.

More than this, when Thrasea, her son-in-law, adjured her not to persist in putting an end to her life, and among other things said, "Is it your wish, then, that your daughter, if ever I should be compelled to die, should die with me?" she replied, "If she shall have lived as long and as united a life with you, as I with Pætus, it *is* my wish." This reply increased the anxiety of her friends, and she was watched more closely than before. Perceiving this, "You are wasting your time," said she; "you can, indeed, bring it to pass that I shall die with difficulty, but not that I shall fail to die." In the act of speaking, she

sprang from her seat and struck her head with great force full against the opposite wall, falling to the ground. "I told you," said she, when she had been brought round by treatment, "that I should find some way, however hard, to death, if you denied me an easy one." Do not these things seem to you grander than the celebrated "Pætus, it gives no pain!" for which they prepared the way? And yet, for all that, one action enjoys great celebrity, and the others none at all. Hence may be gathered, as I started by saying, that what is most famous is not always the greatest.

(17.)

To Servianus.

Can all be well, that your letters have ceased for some time past? Or perhaps all is well, but you are busy? Or you are not busy, but you have few or no opportunities of communicating with me? Relieve me of this uneasiness which is too much for me: pray relieve me of it, even at the cost of sending a special messenger. I will pay him his expenses and make him a present into the bargain, provided only he brings me the news I long for. For myself, I am well, if one can be said to be well who lives in suspense and anxiety, hourly expecting and dreading on the account of his loved friend every possible accident which can befall man.

(18.)

To Curius Severus.

My office of consul imposed on me the duty of congratulating the Emperor in the name of the State. Having done this, according to custom, in the Senate, in a way suitable to the time and place, I deemed it most agreeable to the part of a good citizen, to embrace the same subject at greater length, and with a fuller treatment, in a published volume: firstly, that our Emperor might be

gratified by the exhibition of his own virtues set forth with genuine praises; secondly, that future princes might be admonished beforehand—not in schoolmaster fashion, but at least by an example—of the best road for attaining to the same renown. For to teach what a prince ought to be, though to be sure a noble work, is at the same time an arduous and almost a presumptuous one. Whereas, to praise an admirable prince, and in this way to exhibit to posterity a light, so to speak, from a beacon, such as it may follow—this course has the same advantages as the other, without any air of assumption.

Again, it was no small pleasure to me that when I desired to read this book to my friends, and had bidden them, not by formal cards or handbills, but simply, "if it were convenient," "if they had plenty of time to spare," (and never, in Rome, *do* people have plenty of spare time, or is it convenient to them to listen to a reading), yet they assembled, in the worst possible weather too, for two consecutive days, and when my modesty was for bringing the reading to an end, insisted on my adding a third day. Am I to suppose that this honour was paid to me, or to letters? To letters, I am sure, which once nearly extinct, are now being warmed into life again. But look at the subject to which they paid such devoted attention! Why, it was one which, in the Senate itself, where we were obliged to put up with it, nevertheless used to weary us even in the shortest space of time; yet now persons are found ready to read out and to listen to this same subject for three whole days, not because it is treated with more eloquence than formerly, but because it is treated with greater freedom and consequently with greater heartiness. This then must be added to the praises of our Prince, that a business which was once as hateful as it was untruthful * has become as agreeable as it is genuine.

I must say, however, that I was wonderfully pleased not only with the attention of my audience, but also with

* He alludes in this, and what has preceded, to the bad days of Domitian.

their taste. For I noticed that the gravest passages were those which were most highly approved by them. I am of course aware that I recited to a small number of persons only, what had been written for the general public. None the less, for all that, and just as though the opinion of the public is sure to be the same, I am rejoiced at this severity of taste in the listener, and just as theatrical audiences used to teach the musicians to play badly, so now I am induced to hope that possibly these same audiences may teach them to play well.* For all who write to please will write what they see *does* please. As to myself, however, I am confident that, in this particular kind of subject, I am justified in employing a somewhat lively style, inasmuch as those portions which are plain and devoid of colouring, rather than those which have been penned with gaiety and a certain exuberance, might seem foreign to, and out of keeping with it. Yet none the less earnestly do I pray that there may be a time somewhen (and I hope it may have come already), when the sugared and flattering style will be driven even from ground to which it may seem fairly entitled, in favour of what is serious and severe. You have my doings for three days: I wished you to hear of them, and thus to receive the same pleasure in your absence—both on account of letters generally and myself personally—as you might have enjoyed had you been present.

(19.)

To Calvisius Rufus.

I call you as usual into council on my private affairs. Certain farms are for sale, which adjoin my estate and indeed run into it. In these there are many points which attract me, and some of no less importance which repel me. What attracts me is, first of all, that it would be a

* This is said figuratively. The reference is still to written compositions and recitations.

fine thing in itself to join the two properties, next that it would be a source of advantage no less than of pleasure to be able to visit both of them at the same time and at the expense of one journey, to place them under the same stewards, one may almost say under the same overseers, and while inhabiting and embellishing one house, merely to have to keep the other one in repair. As elements in this calculation there are the cost of furniture, the charges of head-servants, gardeners, workmen, and hunting equipage as well: since it makes a great difference whether these objects are collected in one spot or dispersed about in various places. On the other hand, I fear it may be imprudent to expose such an amount of property to the same climate and the same casualties. It seems safer to test the mutability of fortune by varying the situation of one's possessions. Besides, there is much that is agreeable in the change of scene and of climate, and in the mere travelling about from one property to another. Now the chief point on which I am deliberating is this; the lands are fertile, rich and well-watered, they consist of meadows, vineyards, and woods which furnish timber, and hence a revenue which, though moderate in amount, is sure.* But this fruitfulness of the soil is deteriorated by the poverty of those who cultivate it. For the former owner used often to distrain on the tenant's stock, and while diminishing for a time the arrears due from his farmers, he drained them of their resources for the future, and owing to the failure of these, the arrears grew up again. Hence these people must be furnished with slaves, who will cost all the more because they must be honest ones. For as to slaves in chains, I have none such anywhere, nor has any one in those parts. It remains to let you know the price at which it seems the property can be bought: three millions of sesterces,† not but what it was at one time five millions,‡ but owing to this miserable

* *Statum* not subject to fluctuations. This relates to the woods only.

† About £24,000.

‡ About £40,000.

state of the farmers and the generally unfavourable times, the income from the land has gone back and the price with it. You will ask whether I can easily raise even this sum of three millions? True, nearly the whole of my property is in land, yet I have some money out at interest, and it will not be difficult for me to borrow. My mother-in-law will accommodate me, whose cash-box is as much at my service as my own. Accordingly do not let this influence you, if the remaining considerations are not in the way, all of which I would beg you to examine with the utmost care. For as in all other matters, so in the disposal of property, you are rich in experience and in judgment.

(20.)

To Messius Maximus.

Do you not remember often reading what disputes were raised by the law on voting-tablets, and what an amount, either of glory or censure, it brought on him who carried it? Now, however, in the Senate, this same practice has been approved as the best, without any difference of opinion. Every one, on the day of the Comitia, called for tablets. In truth, with our system of undisguised and open voting, we had come to exceed the licence of public meetings. No order in speaking, no silent reserve, not even the decorum of remaining seated, was attended to. In all directions there were loud and discordant clamours; every one rushed forward with his own candidate; there were a number of groups in the middle of the chamber, and a number of rings formed, and an unseemly confusion. To such an extent had we degenerated from the usage of our ancestors, in whose times everything was so carefully ordered and regulated and calmly conducted, as to preserve the majesty and reverence of the place. There are old men still living who tell me that the order of the Comitia was as follows:—The candidate was summoned

by name, upon which there was a dead silence. He spoke for himself, set forth his life, gave the names of his references and backers, either that of the officer under whom he had served in the army, or else of the magistrate whose quæstor he had been, or of both, if he were able, to which he added those of some of his supporters. These spoke on his behalf with propriety, and shortly; and this was of more avail than canvassing.* Sometimes a candidate would take exception to the birth, or the age, or even the character of an opponent. The senate listened with the gravity of a censor. Hence merit generally prevailed over interest. Now that these usages have been corrupted by extravagant favouritism, recourse has been had to secret voting as a kind of remedy. And a remedy, for the time, it certainly was, being something quite new and unexpected. But I fear that as time goes on the remedy itself will give birth to evils. There is, indeed, a danger that a contempt for honesty may steal into this silent voting; for how few there are who have the same regard for their honour in private as they have publicly. Many stand in awe of public opinion, few of their own consciences. However, it is too soon to talk of what lies in the future; for the present, by favour of the ballot, we shall have the magistrates whose appointment was most desirable. For, just as in proceedings where "Reciperators"† are nominated, so we, at these Comitia, being as it were suddenly pounced upon, turned out honest judges.

I have written this to you, first, in order to write of something new; next that I may occasionally speak of public affairs: the occasions for which, as they are rarer for us than for our ancestors, so they are the less to be

* *Preces.* Supplications on his behalf, of which (as Gierig remarks) Pliny himself has furnished us a specimen in Bk. ii. Ep. 9.

† *Reciperatores.* Judges called on to decide some matter of fact, and who, it seems, were liable to be selected from persons in court, and not from the regular list. Hence, as there was no opportunity of tampering with them, they were more likely to give an honest decision. This is the point of Pliny's comparison.

neglected. And, by Hercules, when shall we cease hearing those commonplace "How d'ye do's?" and "I hope you are wells?" I would have our letters be of those which contain something out of the common and the paltry, and what is confined to private interests. All things, to be sure, are at the disposal of one who, for the common advantage, has taken on himself single-handed the cares and labours of all; yet by a healthful dispensation of them there flow down even to us certain rills, so to speak, from that bounteous source, such as we cannot only drink in ourselves, but also in a manner supply to our absent friends through the medium of our letters.

(21.)

To Cornelius Priscus.

I hear that Valerius Martialis * is dead, and am sorry for it. He was a man of ingenuity, acuteness, and wit, one in whose writings there was a great deal of salt and gall, with no less kindliness. I made him a present towards his journey when he left the city. It was a gift in honour of our friendship, and also in honour of a short poem which he wrote about me. It was the custom of old to confer honorary distinctions or pecuniary rewards on those who had written the praises either of individuals or of cities; but in our days, together with other admirable and excellent practices, this one has been among the first to grow obsolete. Since we have left off doing things worthy of being praised, we consider praise itself impertinent. You will ask for the verses for which I showed my gratitude. I would refer you to the volume itself if I did not happen to recollect some of them. If these should please you, you can look for the rest in the book. He addresses the muse, he bids her seek my house on the Esquiline, and approach it respectfully.

* Martial, the poet.

Only take care, my tipsy muse,
That a fit and proper time you choose
To knock at my Pliny's eloquent gates.
To the stern Minerva he devotes
All his days, and elaborates
What may win the Hundred Judges' votes.
Speeches which this and the coming age
May venture to match with Tully's page.
When may you safely go? When the light
Of the lamps is burning late, and the night
Grows wild with the wine-cup, and the rose
Is queen of the feast, and the perfume flows
From dripping locks. In that hour of thine
Stern Catos may read this book of mine.*

Does not one who wrote thus of me, and whom I then dismissed on such friendly terms, deserve that now, too, his death should be lamented by me as that of a dear friend? For he bestowed on me all that he could, and would have bestowed more, if he had had it in his power to do so. And yet what more can be bestowed on a man than glory and renown and immortality? "But the things he wrote will not be immortal." Perhaps not, yet he wrote them as if they were destined to be so.

* Martial, x. 19. I have taken the liberty of borrowing the above rendering from Messrs. Church and Brodribb's "Pliny for English Readers."

BOOK IV.

(1.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

You are desirous, after so long an interval, of beholding your grand-daughter and me with her. This desire of yours is, by Hercules, mutually gratifying to both of us. For, on our side, we are possessed by an incredible yearning for you, which we shall no longer put off: nay more, we are actually packing up our traps, with the intention of hurrying as fast as the plan of our journey will permit. We shall make one stoppage, though only a short one. We shall have to turn out of the way to my Tuscan property, not for the purpose of inspecting the estate and my belongings there (for that can be postponed), but in order to discharge an indispensable duty. There is a town near the estate, called Tifernum Tiberinum, which, while I was still little more than a boy, adopted me for its patron, with a partiality proportioned to its want of judgment. It celebrates my visits to it, is pained at my departure, and rejoices in the honours paid me. In this place, with the view of showing my gratitude—for it is a great discredit to be outdone in affection—I have built a temple at my own expense, and, as it is now completed, it would be an act of impiety to defer consecrating it any longer. Hence we shall be there on the day of consecration, which I have decided to celebrate by a banquet. We shall perhaps stay there the following day as well; but we shall make all the more haste on the journey itself. May it only be our good fortune to find you and your daughter in health, for we shall be sure to find you in spirits if we reach you safely.

(2.)

To Attius Clemens.

Regulus has lost his son; it was the only misfortune that he did not deserve, and I doubt whether he thinks it a misfortune.* He was a boy of quick parts, but uncertain character, yet one who might have pursued a right course provided he did not resemble his father. Regulus had set the lad free from parental control, in order that he might be constituted heir to his mother, and having thus "sold"† him (so it was styled in common talk derived from the character of the man) proceeded to toady him under a disgusting and unparental pretence of indulging him. The thing seems incredible, but then remember Regulus! However, he mourns his son's loss like a madman. The boy had a number of ponies for harness and saddle; he had dogs large and small, nightingales, parrots, and blackbirds, all of which Regulus slaughtered at the funeral pile. This was not grief, but the ostentation of grief. He is visited by a wonderful number of people, by all of whom he is abominated and detested; yet just as though they esteemed and had a regard for him, they hurry to attend on him, and, to state shortly my opinion, in gaining the good graces of Regulus, they make themselves like him. He keeps to his gardens on the other side of the Tiber, where he has covered a large space of ground with vast colonnades, as also the bank of the river with statues of himself. So lavish is he, with all his consummate avarice, and so vainglorious in the midst of his consummate infamy. Thus, he is a nuisance‡ to the city at this most unhealthy season, and his being a nuisance is a source of consolation

* The meaning might also be, "He does not deserve the *misfortune*, because in point of fact he does not deem it to be one." Döring thinks this too harsh for Pliny. But this letter is harsh enough.

† There is a play on the words *emancipare* and *mancipare* in the text which cannot be rendered. In appearance Regulus had "emancipated" his son, but the world spoke of the act as a "sale" for a consideration.

‡ By obliging his flatterers to remain at Rome in order to pay court to him.

to him. He gives out that he wishes to marry: this too, like everything else, in his perverse way. You will soon hear of the wedding of this mourner, of this old man—a wedding in one point of view too early, in another too late. You ask whence I augur this. Not because he affirms it himself, for there does not exist a greater liar; but because it is certain that Regulus will do whatever he ought not to do.

(3.)

To Arrius Antoninus.

That you have been twice Consul, and one of antique mould; that you have been Pro-consul of Asia, and such a one as either before you or after you has appeared but once or twice (your modesty does not allow me to say *never*); that by reason of your virtue and your authority, your age too, you are a Chief of the State—all this claims reverence and admiration; yet it is in your relaxations that *I* still more admire you. For, to season such majesty with a like degree of geniality, and to unite to the loftiest deportment a disposition no less affable, this is as difficult as it is noble. And this you achieve not only by a certain incredible charm in your conversation, but also more particularly by your writings. For, as you speak, the famed honey of old Homer seems to flow forth, and what you write the bees seem to fill with the nectar of their flowers.* Such certainly was the impression made on myself when reading lately your Greek epigrams and iambics. What polish of diction there is in them, what attractiveness of form, how sweet, how full of love, how melodious, how appropriate they are! I thought I had got hold of Callimachus, or Herodes, or something still better, if there be such. Yet neither of these authors carried to perfection, or even attempted, both kinds of composition.† That a

* *Complere floribus et nectare.* Keil reads, *Complere floribus et innectere.* But bees stringing together flowers seems a violent metaphor.

† *i.e.*, Epigrams and Iambics. Pliny seems to have been mistaken about Callimachus.

Roman citizen should write such Greek! As true as Heaven, I should not call Athens herself so Attic. Why say more? I envy the Greeks in that you have preferred to write in their tongue. Nor is there much need to conjecture what you would be able to produce in your native language, if you can turn out such admirable works in a foreign and transplanted one.

(4.)

To Sosius Senecio.

I have a very strong regard for Varisidius Nepos, an industrious, learned, and, what with me has the greatest possible weight, an honest man. At the same time he is very closely connected with C. Calvisius, my old crony and your friend, being indeed his sister's son. I beg that you will add to his lustre, both in his own and his maternal uncle's eyes, by conferring on him a tribuneship for six months. You will oblige me, you will oblige our friend Calvisius, you will oblige Nepos himself, who will prove a debtor no less to your mind than you esteem us to be. You have conferred many favours on many people, yet I venture to contend that there is none which you will have invested to greater advantage, and only one here and there so well.

(5.)

To Sparsus.

They relate that Æschines, at the request of the Rhodians, recited an oration of his own, and afterwards one by Demosthenes, each of them amid loud applause. I do not wonder that this fortune should have attended the productions of such men, seeing that a very learned audience lately listened to an oration of my own with so much zeal and approval, and application even, for two whole days, although there was no comparison between one author and another, no contest, so to speak, to kindle their atten-

tion. For the Rhodians were incited not only by the actual merits of the orations, but also by the stimulus of comparison, while my oration was approved without the advantage of rivalry. Whether this approval was deserved or not you will learn when you have read the speech itself, the extent of which does not permit me to preface it by a more protracted letter. For *here* certainly, where brevity is possible, I ought to be brief, so that the speech itself may find the more excuse for its length, though it is not lengthened beyond the importance of its theme.

(6.)

To Julius Naso.

My Tuscan produce has been swept off by the hail. In the country over the Po we are informed of great abundance, but proportionate low prices. My Laurentine property is the only one that brings me in anything. To be sure, I own nothing there beyond a house and garden and the immediate sands, yet it is the only one that brings me in anything. For there I write a great deal, and improve, not the land (which I have not got), but *myself* by means of study; and just as in other places I can show you a full barn, so here I can actually show you a full escritoire.* Do you, too, then, if you are anxious for an estate with a safe income and fertile soil, provide yourself with something on this coast.

(7.)

To Catius Lepidus.

I often tell you that there is energy† in Regulus. It is wonderful how he accomplishes whatever he has applied himself to. He was pleased to mourn for his son. Well, he mourns for him as no other man could. He was pleased

* *Scrinium.* A kind of desk or box for keeping books and manuscripts.

† *Vim.* "go," would exactly give the sense here.

to have as many statues and likenesses made of him as possible. Well, he sets to work in all the studios, and turns out the boy in colours, ditto in wax, ditto in brass, ditto in silver, ditto in gold, in ivory, in marble. Then, for his own account, he lately invited a huge audience, and read out to them a book all about his life —the life of a boy! However, he read it out; and this same book, after it had been transcribed into a thousand copies, he distributed throughout the whole of Italy and the provinces, with public instructions in writing, to the effect that the Decurions* should choose one out of their own number, with the best voice, to read it to the people. This was done accordingly. If he had only directed to better purposes this energy of his (or by whatever other name we are to call the determination to obtain all one's ends), how much good he might have effected! Though, to be sure, there is less energy in good than in bad men, and just as "resolution is engendered by ignorance and hesitation by reflection,"† so honest natures are enfeebled by their modesty, while perverse ones are encouraged by their effrontery. Regulus is an example of this. He has weak lungs, a confused utterance, a faltering delivery, the slowest faculty of imagination, no memory at all; nothing, in short, beyond his wild capacity, and yet through his impudence and this very frantic power of his he has got to the point of being esteemed an orator. Hence Herennius Senecio applied to him admirably the converse of Cato's well-known saying about the orator. "An orator is a *bad* man, *un*skilled in the art of speaking." And, by Hercules, Cato himself has not so well described the true orator as Senecio has described Regulus.

Have you the means of making an equivalent return for such a letter as this? Yes, you have, if you will write word whether any of my friends in your town, whether

* I. 8, note.

† Thucyd. i. 40. "The native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought" of Shakespeare is somewhat to the same effect.

you yourself, perhaps, have read out, like a cheap-jack in the forum, this doleful production of Regulus; "raising your voice," to wit, as Demosthenes has it, "and full of glee, and straining your windpipe." Indeed, it is so silly that it is calculated to excite laughter more than lamentation. You would imagine it was written not *about* a boy, but *by* a boy.

(8.)

To Maturus Arrianus.

You congratulate me on my having been invested with the Augurship. You are warranted in your congratulations, first of all, because it is a great thing to win the deliberate approval of a most exemplary prince even where the matter is a small one; next, because the priestly office is not only by nature an ancient one connected with religion, but is moreover rendered completely sacred and exceptional in this respect that it cannot be taken from the holder during his lifetime. For other offices, though almost on a par with this in point of dignity, as they are conferred, so in like manner they can be taken away. In regard to this one, the power of Fortune does not go beyond the matter of granting it. Moreover, to me it seems an additional cause of congratulation that I have succeeded Julius Frontinus, a man of great mark, who on the day of nomination for these several past years in succession used to propose me for the priesthood, as though adopting me into his place, an act which now the event has approved in such a way that it cannot seem to have been fortuitous. You, however, as you write, are chiefly delighted at my being augur because M. Tullius* was one. You are rejoiced, that is, at my stepping into the honours of one whom I long to emulate in my intellectual pursuits. But oh that, as like him I have obtained the priestly office and the consulship, and indeed at a much earlier time of life

* Cicero.

than his, so also, in old age at any rate, I might attain to some share of his mental powers! Yet, to be sure, what is in the power of man falls to my lot as well as to that of many others. But in proportion as it is difficult to acquire, so is it too much even to hope for gifts which lie in the hands of the gods alone.

(9.)

To Cornelius Ursus.

Julius Bassus has been upon his defence during the last few days, a man who has seen much trouble, and one celebrated for his misfortunes. He was accused under Vespasian by two persons in a private station, then sent before the Senate, where he remained long in suspense, at last acquitted and discharged. He stood in fear of Titus, as being a friend of Domitian's, and by Domitian himself he was banished. Recalled by Nerva, he had the province of Bithynia allotted to him, and returned thence under impeachment, being as eagerly prosecuted as he was faithfully defended. He encountered various judgments in the Senate, most of them, however, taking a lenient view. Pomponius Rufus appeared for the prosecution, a ready and powerful speaker. He was followed by Theophanes, one of the provincial agents, the firebrand and originator of the accusation. I replied. For Bassus had charged me to establish the groundwork of his entire defence; to speak of his distinctions, which, from the splendour of his family and the actual perils he had undergone, were great; of the conspiracy of the informers against him, which they were working for their own profit; of the causes of his having given offence to the most factious fellows, such as this very Theophanes. He had wished me at the same time to advance and meet the charge which pressed him most closely. For, as to other charges, however serious they might sound, he deserved not merely acquittal, but even praise. What weighed on him was this—that, being a simple and unsuspecting man, he had accepted

certain gifts from the provincials in the character of their friend, for he had once been Quaestor in the same province. These, his accusers termed plunder and rapine: *he* termed them presents. But the law forbids even presents being accepted. Hereupon, what was I to do, what course of defence was I to enter upon? Should I traverse the fact? I was apprehensive that it would appear plainly to be "plunder" from my being afraid to admit it. Moreover, to deny a matter that was clear would be to act so as to augment the gravity of the accusation, instead of impairing it, particularly where the defendant himself had left no option to his counsel. For he had told a number of people, and even the Emperor, that he had accepted these "little presents" alone (and sent many of the same kind) merely on the occasion of his birthday, or during the Saturnalia. Should I implore pardon for him then? It would be cutting the defendant's throat to concede that he had erred in such a way that he could only be saved by a pardon. Should I defend the act as a legitimate one? I should have done him no good, and should only have exhibited my own effrontery. In this strait I determined to preserve a kind of middle course, and I seem to have succeeded. My speech, as in the case of battles, was stopped by nightfall. I had spoken for three hours and a half: one hour and a half remained to me. For since, in accordance with law, the prosecutor had been granted six hours, and the defendant nine, the latter had so divided the time between me and the counsel who was to follow me, that I could employ five hours and he the remainder. But the success of my speech prompted me to say no more and to make an end of it. For it is rash not to be satisfied with what has gone off well. Besides, I feared that my bodily strength might fail me for a renewed effort, it being more difficult to resume than to continue without a break. There was danger, too, that the rest of my speech might suffer a chill as a thing that had been put by, and might prove tedious as a thing brought out afresh. For, just as torches preserve

their fire by being constantly shaken, and renew it with great difficulty when it has been once let down, so the warmth of the speaker and the attention of the hearer are kept up by continuity, and are weakened by intermission and, if I may so speak, relaxation.

However, Bassus, with many prayers and almost tears, begged me to complete my time; so I complied, preferring his interests to my own. Success attended me: the minds of the Senate were so attentive and so fresh that they seemed to be whetted rather than satisfied by my previous speech. Lucceius Albinus followed me, so appositely that our speeches might be thought to unite the variety of two, with the consistency of a single oration. Herennius made a spirited and weighty reply, then came Theophanes again. For here too, as usual, he behaved with consummate impudence, in that, after two speakers, men of consular rank as well as of eloquence, he claimed further time for himself, and that, too, pretty freely. He spoke till nightfall and even after nightfall, lights having been brought in. The next day, Homullus and Fronto spoke admirably for Bassus, and the fourth day was occupied by the examination of proofs. Bæbius Macer, Consul-Elect, gave it as his opinion that Bassus had subjected himself to the law against bribery and extortion; Cæpio Hispo, that he should retain his Senatorial rank, and have judges assigned him.* Both of them were in the right. How can that be, you ask, when they gave such opposite opinions? Why, because Macer, looking to the law, was quite consistent in condemning one who had accepted presents contrary to law; and Cæpio, deeming that the Senate has the power, as certainly it has, to mitigate the force of laws as well as to construe them strictly, was not without reason in extending a pardon to acts which, though forbidden, are not unfrequently practised. The opinion of Cæpio prevailed: nay more, when he rose to state it, he was cheered as Senators usually are

* See ii. 11. note.

on resuming their seats: from this, you may judge what approval greeted what he *did* say, when such favour was shown to what it was supposed that he *would* say.

However, not only in the Senate but also in the city, there are two divisions of opinion. For, those who approve the proposal of Cæpio find fault with that of Macer as being too harsh and severe: while those who go with Macer, style the former a lax and indeed an inconsistent proposal: for they say that it is not consistent to retain a man in the Senate to whom judges have been assigned. There was also a third proposition: Valerius Paulinus, agreeing with Cæpio, was for adding to the motion, that Theophanes be proceeded against at the termination of his agency. For he was charged with having done many acts in the course of the prosecution which were infringements of the very law in virtue of which he had accused Bassus. But this motion, greatly as it approved itself to a large majority of the Senate, was not acted on by the Consuls. However, Paulinus obtained credit for his honesty and courage. On the adjournment of the Senate, Bassus was welcomed by a large concourse, and with great shouting and joy. He had been made popular by this revival of the old tradition of his troubles, by his name known through the perils with which it was connected, by his advanced age with its dejection and squalor * united to a stately figure. Take this interim letter as an avant-courier, and look out for my oration in full, and charged with matter: you will, however, have to look out for it for a good long time: for it will have to be retouched, considering the importance of the subject, with no light or superficial hand.

(10.)

To Statius Sabinus.

You write me word that Sabina, who has left us her heirs, though she has nowhere directed that Modestus her

* The squalid appearance affected by accused persons.

slave should be freed, nevertheless has added a legacy in his favour in these terms, "To Modestus, whom I directed to be freed." You ask for my view. I have consulted legal authorities; all are of the same opinion, that he cannot claim his liberty, because it has not been granted him, nor again his legacy, because it was given to a slave. But to me this seems a clear case of slip: I am therefore of opinion that we should do, just as if Sabina had directed it, that which certainly she herself thought she had directed. I am confident that you will accede to my judgment, since you are in the habit of observing most religiously the wishes of the departed, which once understood will have the force of law for honest heirs. For, with us, honour weighs no less than necessity with others. Let the man remain free then, with our consent; let him enjoy his legacy as though every precaution had been carefully taken. Indeed, Sabina *has* taken these precautions, since she has made a prudent choice of heirs.

(11.)

To Cornelius Minicianus.

Have you heard that Valerius Licinianus is lecturing in Sicily? I fancy you have not yet heard it, for the news is but recent. This personage of Prætorian rank was lately esteemed among the most eloquent members of the bar; he has now fallen so low as to have become an exile instead of a senator, a teacher of rhetoric instead of an orator. Hence, he himself, in a prefatory address, exclaimed in sorrowful and solemn tones, "What sport dost thou make for thyself, oh Fortune! For thou makest Professors out of Senators, and Senators out of Professors!" a sentiment in which there is so much bile and bitterness, that he seems to me to have turned Professor for the express purpose of uttering it. This same man, when he had made his entrance, clad in a Greek mantle (for those

who are interdicted from fire and water * are deprived of the right to wear the toga), after he had settled himself and given an eye to his dress, remarked, "I am going to declaim in *Latin!*"

All very sad and pitiful, you will say, but the man deserved it for having polluted this very profession of eloquence by the guilt of incest. To be sure, he confessed to the incest, but it is uncertain whether he did this because it was the fact, or because he feared worse consequences if he denied it. Domitian was at that time raging and storming, abandoned to his own resources,† in the midst of the vast odium he had incurred. For when he had become bent on burying alive Cornelia, the chief of the Vestal virgins, under the notion that his reign would be illustrated by examples of this kind; in virtue of his right as Pontifex Maximus, or rather, with the brutality of a tyrant and the licence of a despot, he summoned his colleagues, not to the Pontifical palace, but to his Alban villa. Then, with a wickedness not falling short of that which he had the air of punishing, he pronounced her guilty of incest, in her absence and without hearing her; he, the very man who had not only incestuously polluted his brother's daughter, but had murdered her into the bargain, for she died of abortion in her widowhood. The Pontifices were despatched forthwith to see to Cornelia's being buried and put an end to. As for her, raising her hands, now to Vesta, now to the rest of the gods, she uttered, among many cries, this one most often, "Does Cæsar deem *me* incestuous, who performed the sacred rites when he conquered, when he triumphed?" Whether she said this with the intention to flatter or else to mock him, whether from confidence in her own virtue or from contempt for the Emperor, is a matter of doubt;

* *I.e.*, are under sentence of banishment.

† Unable to find any justification for the acts which Pliny proceeds to relate. The subject proper (that of Licinianus) is resumed at the beginning of the next paragraph.

however, she kept on saying it till she was led to execution, innocent or not I cannot say, but certainly with the appearance of innocence. Moreover, as she was being escorted down to that terrible subterranean dungeon, her dress catching in the course of her descent, she turned round and disengaged it, and on the executioner offering her his hand, she shuddered and started back, rejecting this foul pollution of her person, as though evidently chaste and pure, with a last expression of sanctity, and, exhibiting in all points her modest demeanour,

"Took every care to fall with decency." *

Moreover, Celer, a Roman knight, who was charged as the accomplice of Cornelia, had persisted in crying out, while being beaten with rods in the Comitium, "What have I done? I have done nothing!"

Domitian, then, was raging under a sense of the ill repute of his cruelty and injustice. So he pounced on Licinianus for concealing a freedwoman of Cornelia at his country place. The latter was forewarned by those who had charge of him to take refuge in a confession, as in a means of pardon, if he had not a mind for the Comitia and the rods. This he did. Herennius Senecio spoke for him, in his absence, somewhat after the fashion of the well-known "Patroclus is dead." † For he said, "Instead of pleading a cause, I have only a message to deliver. Licinianus abandons his defence." This was very agreeable to Domitian, so much so that he could not help showing his joy, and saying, "Licinianus clears us." He went so far as to add, "that the culprit's shame should not be pressed too hard," and permitted him, in fact, to carry off anything he could from his effects, before his property was confiscated, granting him an easy place of exile as a kind of premium. Thence, however, he was subsequently

* A line from the 'Hecuba' of Euripides.

† *I.e.*, spoke for him as briefly and concisely as Antilochus did when announcing to Achilles the death of Patroclus.

transferred, by the clemency of the late Emperor Nerva, to Sicily, where he now gives lectures and revenges himself on fortune by his prefatory addresses.

You see the readiness with which I obey you, in that I write to you not only of town affairs, but foreign ones as well, and with such care as to trace them to their source. And to be sure I thought that, as you were absent at the time, you had heard nothing further of Licinianus than that he had been banished for incest. For Fame reports to us the substance of things, not their details. I deserve that you, in turn, should write me in full about what is passing in your town and neighbourhood (where events worthy of notice not unfrequently occur); in short, relate whatever you please, provided only your letter be as long as mine. I shall count not only the sheets, but the lines and syllables into the bargain.

(12.)

To Maturus Arrianus.

You love Egnatius Marcellinus, and indeed often commend him to me. You will love him and commend him still more, when you are made acquainted with a recent action of his. When he had gone out to his province as Quæstor, and had lost there a clerk who had been allotted him, before the latter had become entitled to his salary, he felt, and so decided, that the amount which he had received for the purpose of paying the clerk, ought not to remain in his hands. Consequently, on his return, he consulted Cæsar, and afterwards, by Cæsar's advice, the Senate, as to what they would have done with the salary. It was a small question; still it *was* a question. The clerk's heirs claimed the amount for themselves, and the heads of the Treasury claimed it for the public. The case was tried. Counsel spoke for the heirs and, after that, for the public: both of them excellently well. Cæcilius Strabo moved that the money should be paid into the

Treasury; Bæbius Macer that it should be handed to the heirs. Strabo prevailed. Do you give all credit to Marcellinus, as I did on the spot. For, though it be abundantly sufficient for him to be approved both by the Prince and the Senate, yet he will rejoice in your testimony. All those indeed who are led by glory and fame are marvellously pleased with approval and praise, even when these proceed from their inferiors: whereas, in your case, Marcellinus holds you in such respect that he attributes the greatest weight to your judgment. Add to this that if he shall learn of this action of his penetrating as far as you, he will necessarily be delighted with the reach and the progress and the wide sweep of his repute. Since, I know not how it is, but men are still more pleased by an extended than by a great reputation.

(13.)

To Cornelius Tacitus.

I am glad you have arrived in town safely: and if ever before now your arrival has been looked for by me, it has been particularly so on the present occasion. I myself shall remain yet a few days at my Tusculan place, in order to complete a literary trifle now on hand. For I fear that if my ardour were relaxed just as the work approaches completion, it would with difficulty be resumed. Meanwhile, to satisfy my impatience, what I shall ask of you when we meet, I now request in this letter which is, so to speak, my avant-courier. But first let me tell you the reasons for my request.

In the course of a recent visit to my native parts, a youth, the son of one of my townsmen, came to pay his respects to me. To whom—"Are you studying?" said I. "Certainly," he answered. "Where?" "At Milan." "Why not here?" Said his father (for he was with the boy, and indeed had himself brought him), "Because we have no teachers here." "Why have you none? Surely, it would

be greatly to the interest of you who are fathers,"—and very opportunely there were several fathers within hearing—"that your children should be instructed here rather than anywhere else. Where indeed could they spend their time more pleasantly than in their own neighbourhood, or be subject to more virtuous supervision than under the eyes of their parents, or be at smaller cost than at home? How easy it would be then to unite in subscribing for the purpose of engaging teachers, and to add what is now spent on lodgings, on travelling-expenses, on all those things which have to be purchased away from home (and *everything* has to be purchased away from home) to the salaries devoted to them. Nay, further, I who have as yet no children, am prepared on behalf of our commonwealth, as though she were a daughter or a parent, to contribute a third part of whatever you shall determine to subscribe. I would even promise the whole amount, were it not for the fear that such a gift might one day be perverted by means of jobbery, as I see happens in many places where teachers are engaged at the public expense. This abuse can only be met by one remedy, and that is, that the right of making these engagements should be left to the parents alone, and that the conscientious care of deciding rightly should be imposed on them by the necessity of subscribing. For those who would perhaps be careless of other people's property, will certainly be careful of their own, and will see to it that none but a deserving person shall receive *my* money, if he is to receive *theirs* as well. Accordingly, I would have you come to an agreement, and band yourselves together, and derive additional spirit from me, who am desirous that the sum which I shall have to contribute may be as large as possible. You can confer nothing more desirable on your children, or more grateful on your own neighbourhood. Let those who are born here be educated here, and from their very infancy let them grow accustomed to love and to inhabit their native soil. And I pray that you may introduce

teachers of such repute that this will be a source to which neighbouring towns will resort for learning, and that, just as now your children flock to other places, so strangers may soon flock to this place."

I have thought it best to repeat all this in detail, and from its source, so to speak, in order that you might the better understand how agreeable it would be to me if you would undertake my commission. Now I commission, and in view of the importance of the matter, entreat you that out of the great number of learned persons who frequent you, from an admiration of your genius, you would look about for some teachers such as we might invite, yet subject to this condition, that I must not be held to pledge myself to any one of them. For I reserve complete freedom for the parents; *they* must judge, *they* must choose: trouble and expense is all *I* claim for myself. Accordingly, if any one be found who has confidence in his own capacity, let him go there with this understanding, that he takes with him from these parts no assurance, save that which he derives from himself.

(14.)

To Paternus.

You perhaps, as your way is, are calling for, and indeed expecting an oration from me. But I—as though drawing from some foreign and luxurious wares—produce for you my poetical recreations. You will receive with this letter some hendecasyllables of mine, with which I amuse my leisure hours, when out driving, or in the bath, or at dinner-time. In these I jest, disport myself, make love, grieve, complain, am angry, indulge in descriptions, at times in a homely, at others in a more elevated strain, and, by the very variety of treatment, aim at this result, that while different parts may please different people, there may be some parts which will possibly please everybody. If, however, some of the number shall appear to you a

trifle too saucy, it will become one of your learning to reflect that those men of great position and high dignity who have written this kind of thing, have not abstained—to say nothing of frolicsome themes—from the most naked expressions. These last I have avoided, not from my being more austere (how indeed could that be?) but from my being more timid than they. Besides, I know that the truest law as to these trifles is that which has been expressed by Catullus.

> "Though pious poets should *themselves* be chaste,
> It does not follow that their strains should be,
> Which then alone of salt will have a taste,
> If they be wanton and a trifle free."

As for me, what an account I make of your judgment, you may estimate e'en from this, that I have preferred that the whole collection should be pondered by you, rather than that selected pieces should meet with your approval. And to be sure the happiest pieces would cease to seem such, as soon as they were matched by others of the same sort. Besides, a sensible and critical reader ought not to compare different kinds of productions with each other, but to estimate each production singly, and not to consider as inferior to another piece a piece which is perfect in its own kind. But why add more? For either to excuse or to commend trifles by a long preface would itself be the height of trifling. There is just one thing which it seems to me ought to be said beforehand, namely, that I think of calling these nugæ of mine "Hendecasyllables," a title which refers merely to the metre. Accordingly, you may call them, if you like, epigrams or idylls or eclogues, or (as many have it) short poems, or by any other name which you prefer; *I* guarantee Hendecasyllables only. I ask of your candour that whatever you will say to others of my small book that you will say to me. Nor is what I ask difficult. For if this little work of mine were either my best or my only

one, perhaps it might seem harsh to say "Seek some other occupation;" but in all gentleness and courtesy it might be said, "You *have* other occupations."

(15.)

To Fundanus.

If there is anything at all in which I show my judgment, it is certainly in my singular affection for Asinius Rufus. He is an excellent man, and one who has a great regard for all good people. (For why should I not count myself, too, among the good?) This same Rufus has attached himself to Cornelius Tacitus—and you know what *he* is—on the closest terms of intimacy. Accordingly, if you hold us both in esteem, needs must be that you have the same opinion of Rufus; since, for the cementing of friendships, the strongest of all ties is to be found in a resemblance of characters. He has several children. For in this respect, too, he has discharged the office of an admirable citizen, in that he has desired to profit largely by the fruitfulness of his wife, in an age when the prizes open to a childless condition make even an only son an encumbrance to many.* Despising such considerations, he has entitled himself to the additional name of grandfather, for he *is* a grandfather; and through Saturius Firmus too, whom you will cherish as I do, when you have made as close acquaintance with him as I have. All which goes to this, that you may learn how important, how numerous a family you will lay under an obligation by one friendly act; to ask for which I am led first of all by my wishes, and next by a certain happy omen. For I wish you and also prognosticate for you the Consulship next year; this your own merits and the Prince's opinion of you lead me to augur. It would fit in with this, that Asinius Bassus, the eldest of Rufus's children, should be Quaestor in the same year, a

* An allusion to the court paid to childless people, with the view of getting a legacy.

young man (I don't know whether I ought to say what the father wishes me both to think and to say, but the youth's modesty forbids) superior even to his father. It would be difficult for you to believe, on my report of one who is absent—though, to be sure, you do believe me in everything—that he can possess so much industry, probity, learning, intelligence, zeal, and finally memory, as you will find that he does when you have tried him. I only wish our age were so fruitful in good qualities that you would be bound to prefer some others to Bassus; in that case I should be the first to exhort and admonish you to look around you and indeed debate a long time as to the best object of your choice. As it is, however—yet I do not wish to speak in any way presumptuously of my friend—at any-rate this only will I say, that the young man is worthy to be adopted by you as a son, after the fashion of our ancestors.* For sages, such as you, ought to accept from the State such children, so to speak, as we pray to receive from Nature. It will be a credit to you in your consulship to have a Quaestor whose father is of Prætorian, whose relatives are of Consular rank, and who, according to their own judgment, though still but a youth, has nevertheless already reflected a mutual lustre on them. Accordingly favour my prayers, follow my advice, and above all, if I seem importunate, forgive me: first, because in a State in which everything is set about by those who, so to speak, take time by the forelock, efforts delayed till the regular time are apt to be too late instead of being in season; next, because, in regard to matters which one is anxious to obtain, the very anticipation of them is a pleasure. Let Bassus begin to revere you as his Consul; do you cherish him as your Quaestor. Finally, let us, who are deeply attached to both of you, enjoy in full a double delight. For since we have such a regard both for you and for Bassus that we should assist, in his pursuit of the honour, with all our resources, exertions, and influence, either Bassus, if nomi-

* Alluding to the close connection between Consul and Quaestor.

nated Quaestor by *any* consul, or *any* Quaestor nominated by you,* so it would be particularly agreeable to us if the circumstances of our friendship and your consulship should be the means of combining our efforts on this one young man; if, in short, you of all others should help my prayers with your assistance, whose choice the Senate will most willingly concur in, and to whose testimony it will attach the greatest weight.

(16.)

To Valerius Paulinus.

Rejoice on my account, rejoice on your own, nay more, rejoice on the public account. Honour still continues to be paid to intellectual pursuits.† On a recent occasion, when I was about to speak before the Centumviri, there was no way for me to get into the court except by the bench and right through the Judges: all the other parts were so closely packed. Add to this that a well-dressed youth, whose tunic had been torn, as often happens in a crowd, persisted in standing, wrapped up in his toga only, and that for seven hours; for I spoke as long as that, not without great exertion and still greater effect. Let us follow our intellectual pursuits, then, and not allege other folks' slothfulness as an excuse for our own. There are those who will listen, there are those who will read, if only we take pains to produce what is worthy of people's ears or of the paper on which it is written.

(17.)

To Asinius Gallus.

You not only admonish, but also entreat me to undertake the cause of Corellia, in her absence, against C.

* It would seem from what follows that the ratification of the appointment rested at this time with the Senate. Hence "illum cujuscumque Quaestorem" must mean "by whatever consul he was nominated Quaestor," &c.

† *Studiis.* He means, to eloquence, but writing of himself uses a more general expression.

Cæcilius, the Consul-Elect. I am obliged to you for your admonition, but must complain of your entreating me. For I ought to be admonished, to be informed, but I ought not to be entreated to do that which in my case it would be highly discreditable not to do. Can *I* hesitate to support the daughter of Corellius? There exists, to be sure, between me and the person against whom you invoke my aid, if not an absolute intimacy, still a friendship. Add to this the position of the man, and this very post of honour to which he is designated, to which it becomes me to pay all the more respect in that I have myself before now filled it. Indeed it is natural that one should wish to attach the greatest distinction to that which has been enjoyed by one's self. But when I reflect that it is on behalf of the daughter of Corellius that I am to appear, all these considerations seem frigid and futile. Before my eyes is the image of that great man, than whom our age has produced none of greater dignity and piety and acuteness of judgment; whom, when I had begun to love him owing to my admiration for him, I admired still more (the contrary of which usually happens), after becoming thoroughly acquainted with him. For I *was* thoroughly acquainted with him. He had no secret for me, either in his jesting or his serious, his sad or his cheerful moods. I was still a stripling, and already he paid me the same honour, and I will venture to say it, respect, as to an equal. He was my supporter and backer whenever I stood for office. He helped to escort and attend upon me when I entered on my charge, he was my adviser and guide in filling it. In short, whenever I had a function to fill, there was he, though feeble and old, to be seen, just as though he had been young and robust. How much did he add to my reputation in private, in public, and even with the prince! For the conversation happening to turn, in the presence of the Emperor Nerva, on virtuous young men, and several persons having praised me, he remained silent for awhile, a habit which added greatly to his im-

pressiveness; and then, with that dignity which you remember, "Needs must be," says he, "that I should be more sparing of my praises of Secundus, inasmuch as he does nothing save by my advice." In this remark he attributed to me what it would have been extravagant to ask for in my prayers; namely, that I did nothing except with the utmost wisdom, inasmuch as all that I did was by the advice of the wisest of men. More than this, on his death-bed, he said to his daughter (she tells the story herself), "I have prepared for you many friends, in virtue of my long life; but the chief of them are Secundus and Cornutus." When I recall this, I understand that every effort must be used by me, not to seem to fall short in any way of the confidence reposed in me by a man of such sagacity. Wherefore, for my part, I shall certainly assist Corellia with all promptitude, and shall not refuse to expose myself to resentments. Though I expect to obtain not only pardon but even approval from the person himself: who, as you say, prosecutes a suit which is a novel one as being against a woman:* if I mention all these circumstances in my speech—of course with greater detail and fulness than the narrow limits of a letter permit—either by way of excuse or even of taking credit to myself.

(18.)

To Arrius Antoninus.

In what way can I better prove to you the extent of my admiration for your Greek Epigrams than by the fact that I have attempted to imitate and render some of them in Latin? Much for the worse, however! This has been caused, in part, by the feebleness of my own powers, but also by the poverty, or rather, as Lucretius has it, by the penury of our native tongue. However, if these productions, which are both written in Latin and written by me,

* Not knowing the character of the suit, we are unable to explain this.

shall seem to you to possess any attractions, what, think you, must be the charm of those which have been produced by you and produced in Greek?

(19.)

To Calpurnia Hispulla.

As you are a model of dutiful affection, as you cherished that excellent brother of yours, who loved you so much, with a regard equal to his, as you cherish his daughter as if she were your own, exhibiting towards her the affection not merely of an aunt, but even of the father whom she has lost—for these reasons, I doubt not, it will be a great joy to you to learn that she is turning out worthy of her father, worthy of you, worthy of her grandfather. She is gifted with remarkable quickness, as well as discretion, and she loves me, which is a token of her purity. To this must be added a love of literature which she has conceived from her tenderness for me. She has got my works, and studies them and even learns them by heart. How great is her anxiety when she sees me going to speak in court, and how great her joy when I have spoken! She sets messengers about to report to her what favour and applause I have excited, and what is the result of the trial. Then, whenever I recite, she sits hard by, separated from us only by a curtain, and catches up with eager ears the praises bestowed on me. She even sings verses of my composing and sets them to her guitar, with no professor to teach her save love, the best of masters. All this leads me to entertain the surest hope of an unbroken harmony between us, destined to increase day by day. For it is not my youth,* nor my person—things which gradually perish and grow old—it is my fame that she cherishes. Nor would any other conduct befit one who has received her education at your hands, who has been formed by your pre-

* *Aetatem*, literally, "time of life." Pliny was probably about forty at this time.

cepts, and who in your abode has witnessed nothing but what was pure and honourable, who, lastly, has grown accustomed to love me, through your commendations of me. For as you revered my mother in the place of a parent, so from my very boyhood were you in the habit of forming me, of praising me, of prognosticating that I should be such as I now appear to my wife to be. We vie with each other, then, in thanking you: I for your having given her to me, she for your having given me to her, as though you had chosen us for each other.

(20.)

To Nonius Maximus.

What my opinion was of your books,* taken singly, I made known after reading through each of them; now you shall hear my general judgment on the whole collection. Your work is noble, vigorous, passionate, elevated, diversified, chaste, rich in figures, comprehensive too, and of a copiousness which reflects credit on the author. In this work you have taken the widest range, and borne on by the sails of your genius as well as of your grief, each of which has mutually assisted the other. For your genius has added sublimity and grandeur to your grief, and your grief has lent force and pungency to your genius.

(21.)

To Velius Cerealis.

How sad, how untimely the fate of the sisters Helvidiæ! Both have died after child-birth, both of them after bearing daughters. I am tormented by grief, nor do I grieve unreasonably. So mournful a thing does it seem to me that these virtuous young ladies should have been carried off, by their fruitfulness, in the flower of their age. I am pained at the lot of the infants so immediately and at the

* *Libris*, here the divisions of a book; probably "cantos."

moment of their birth bereaved of their parents; I am pained on account of the excellent husbands, and indeed on my own account as well. For I cherish an enduring affection for the father of these young ladies, though he be now no more; as has been testified by a speech of mine and by my books. Only one of his three children now survives, and in his desolation is the support and stay of a house lately grounded on so many props. Yet my grief will be greatly alleviated and assuaged if fortune shall preserve *him* at any rate in health and safety, and in resemblance to such a father and grandfather as his were. And I am the more anxious for his well-being and his good conduct, in consequence of his having become an only child. You know the softness of my disposition in matters of affection, and you know my nervousness: hence you ought to be the less surprised at my having great apprehensions in the case of one of whom I entertain great hopes.

(22.)

To Sempronius Rufus.

I have assisted at an inquiry held by our excellent Emperor, having been summoned as one of his assessors. An athletic contest used to be celebrated among the Viennenses * in accordance with some one or other's will. This contest, Trebonius Rufus—an admirable man and a friend of mine—put a stop to and abolished during his Duumvirship. It was alleged that he had no legal authority for thus acting. He pleaded his own cause in person with as much success as eloquence. What commended his address was that he spoke, as a Roman and a good citizen should speak, in an affair concerning himself, in a well-considered dignified fashion. When the opinions of the judges were being taken in succession, Junius Mauricus—than whom there does not exist a more

* The inhabitants of Vienna (now Vienne, in the South of France).

inflexible and straightforward man—declared that the contest ought not to be restored to the Viennenses. He added, "I wish these things could be done away with in Rome as well." Boldly and manfully spoken, you will say. To be sure. But this is nothing new on the part of Mauricus. He spoke just as manfully in the company of the Emperor Nerva. Nerva was dining with a few friends, and Veiento reclined next to him, and even on his bosom: I have said all, when I have named the man. The conversation turned on Catullus Messalinus, who was blind, and in whom to a naturally cruel disposition were superadded the evils of blindness. He was without compunction, without shame, without pity, on which account he was the more often hurled by Domitian—just like darts which are themselves blind and without heed as they go along—against the best men of the State. It was this person's wickedness and sanguinary counsels that formed the subject of general conversation at the dinner-table, when the Emperor himself said, "What must we suppose would have been his fate if he were still living?" Upon which Mauricus replied, "He would be dining with us!"

I have made a long digression, yet not unwillingly. It was decided to do away with the contest, which has corrupted the morals of the Viennenses, as ours here do those of everybody; for the vices of the Viennenses are confined to these people themselves, while *ours* travel far and wide, and, as in human bodies so in states, the worst diseases are those which are diffused from the head.

(23.)

To Pomponius Bassus.

I was greatly pleased on learning from our common friends that you, agreeably to your wisdom, are systematically ordering, as well as bearing with, your retirement, that you have a delightful residence, that you are bodily

active, now on land, now on the sea, that you argue a great deal, listen to a great deal, read a great deal with attention, and, though your knowledge is so extensive, nevertheless learn something fresh every day. This is the way in which a man should grow old, who has filled the highest offices, and commanded armies and devoted himself entirely to the service of the State, as long as it was proper for him to do so; for, early as well as middle life we are bound to bestow on our country, old age upon ourselves, as indeed the laws themselves admonish us, which restore the old man to rest. When will it be allowable for me, when will my age make it honourable, to imitate such a model of noble tranquillity? When will my retirement be entitled to the name, not of slothfulness, but of repose?

(24.)

To Fabius Valens.

After speaking lately, before the Centumviri, in a case which went through the four divisions of the court,* the recollection occurred to me that in my youth I had similarly plead in a fourfold case. My mind, as often happens, travelled a long way: I began to consider who in the latter and who in the former trial had been the companions of my labours. I was the only one who had spoken in both! Such are the changes which are produced either by the fragility of our mortal condition or by the fickleness of fortune. Some of those who pleaded on the former occasion are dead, others are in exile; on one his age and his health have imposed abstinence from speaking; another of his own accord enjoys a delightful repose; another is at the head of an army; another has been excused from civil functions by the favour of the prince. And in con-

* See i. 18.

nection with myself how much that is changed! My profession * was the cause of my advancement; by my profession I was brought into danger, and then once more advanced. The friendship of the virtuous was an assistance to me, then it was against me, now once more it is an assistance. If you reckon by years, all this will seem but a short time; if by the vicissitudes of events, an age. This may be a warning to despair of nothing, and not to put trust in anything, when we see so many mutations brought about in such a whirling cycle. However, it is my habit to share all my reflections with you, and to admonish you with the same precepts and examples as myself, and this has been the motive of my present letter.

(25.)

To Messius Maximus.

I wrote you word there was reason to fear that some abuse might arise from the system of secret voting. The fact has occurred. At the last Comitia, on some of the tablets were found written a number of facetious expressions, and even indecent ones: on one in particular, in lieu of the candidates' names, there were those of some of his supporters. The Senate was furious, and with loud outcries invoked the anger of the Emperor against the writer. He, however, escaped discovery: it is even probable that he was among those who expressed their indignation. What must we suppose this man's private life to be, when, in a matter of such importance, and on an occasion of such solemnity, he indulges in such buffoonery, who, in short, in the Senate, of all places,

* *Studia* must have this sense here. He was in danger under Domitian. His eloquence and learning advanced him again under Nerva and Trajan. When he says that the friendship of the virtuous was against him, he means in the time of Domitian. The favour and approval of the best citizens made him an object of suspicion to the tyrant.

exhibits his waggery and humour and smartness. Such additional license is imparted to ill-disposed minds by that assurance, "Who will know anything about it?" This fellow must have called for a tablet, taken his pencil, and lowered his head to write, in awe of no one, and with no respect for himself. Hence these antics worthy of the stage-boards. Which way can one turn? What remedy can one discover? Everywhere the abuses are worse than the remedies.

"But this to one above us is a care," * whose watchful exertions are so much added to, day by day, by this impotent and yet unbridled wantonness of our time.

(26.)

To Mæcilius Nepos.

You ask me to have my small productions—which you have most carefully furnished yourself with—read over and revised. What is there indeed that I ought to undertake more willingly, especially at your request? For since you, a man of such dignity, learning, and eloquence, and in addition to this, one so fully occupied, being indeed about to undertake the government of an important province—since you think it worth while to carry my writings about with you, with what diligence ought I to make provision that this portion of your baggage may not seem a superfluous encumbrance to you. I shall endeavour then, first, to make these companions of yours as agreeable to you as possible, and next, that on your return you shall find others such as you may like to add to these. For in no small degree am I urged on to fresh works by the fact that you are among my readers.

* To the Emperor. A quotation probably from some lost Greek play.

(27.)

To Pompeius Falco.

It is just three days since I attended a recitation by Sentius Augurinus, with the greatest pleasure, and indeed admiration, as far as I am concerned. His title is "Short Poems." There is much that is simple, much that is elevated, much of the graceful and the tender, a great deal of sweetness, and a great deal of bile in them. It is some years, I think, since anything more perfect in the same style has been written: unless, it may be, I am deceived by my partiality for the writer, or by the circumstance that he has lauded me. For he has taken as the theme* of one of his pieces, that I sometimes disport myself in verse. Nay more, I will have *you* be judge of *my* judgment, if the second line of this very piece recurs to me—the others I remember—stay, now, I have disentangled it.

Sweetly flow my tender lays,
 Like Calvus' or Catallus' strains
(Bards approved of ancient days),
 Where love in all its sweetness reigns.

Yet wherefore *ancient* poets name?
 Let Pliny my example be;
Him the sacred wine inflame—
 More than *ancient* poets he!

To mutual love he tunes the lay,
 While far the noisy bar he flies;
Say then, ye grave, ye formal say,
 Who shall gentle love despise? †

You see how pointed, how apt, how expressive everything is. I promise you that the whole book corresponds to this taste of it, and I will send it you as soon as he has published it. Meanwhile, bestow your approval on the

* *Lemma*, literally "the heading." A little lower down it is used of the piece itself.

† I have borrowed Melmoth's translation, which, though not very literal, gives a sufficient idea of the original.

young man, and congratulate our epoch on the possession of such a genius, which is set off too by his virtuous conduct. He spends his time with Spurinna and Antoninus; he is related to one of them, and an intimate of both. You will hence be able to conjecture how blameless the youth must be who is thus loved by old men of such lofty worth—

Well knowing that
A man is like the company he keeps.*

(28.)

To Vibius Severus.

Herennius Severus, a man of great culture, is extremely anxious to place in his library the likenesses of your townsmen, Cornelius Nepos and Titus Catius, and he begs me, if they can be found in your neighbourhood, as it is likely they may be, to give an order to have copies of them painted. This commission I enjoin on you particularly: first, because you are most obliging in complying with my behests; next, because you have the highest regard for literature and the greatest affection for literary men; lastly, because you venerate and cherish your native soil, and equally with that soil itself those who have added to its reputation. I beg further that you will engage as skilful a painter as possible. For since it is hard to produce a likeness even from life, so the imitation of an imitation is a matter of extraordinary difficulty. And I beg that you will not suffer the artist whom you select to deviate from his copy, even in the direction of improving on it.

(29.)

To Romatius Firmus.

Hark'ee, friend! when next business is being transacted, manage by hook or by crook to attend the trial.

* The original is from Euripides.

It is no good sleeping on your right side and trusting to me. Look you, Licinius Nepos when Prætor—a rigid and determined man as well as a Prætor—once imposed a fine even on a Senator. The latter pleaded his cause in the Senate, but he pleaded it as though suing for forgiveness. The fine was remitted; however, the man had a fright, and had to entreat, and a pardon was necessary. You will say, "All Prætors are not so severe." You are mistaken; for though only severe ones may establish or reintroduce precedents of this sort; yet, when once they are established or reintroduced, even the most indulgent ones may put them in force.

(30.)

To Licinius Sura.

I have brought you from my native parts, in lieu of a present, a problem in a high degree worthy of your great attainments. A certain spring rises in a mountain, and runs down through the rocks, till it is enclosed in a small dining-parlour made by hand; after being slightly retarded there, it empties itself into the Larian lake. Its nature is very remarkable. Three times a day it is increased and diminished in volume by a regular rise and fall. This can be plainly seen, and when perceived is a source of great enjoyment. You recline close to it, and take your food and even drink from the spring itself (for it is remarkably cold); meanwhile, with a regular and measured movement, it either subsides or rises. If you place a ring or any other object on the dry ground, it is gradually moistened and finally covered over; then again it comes to view, and is by degrees deserted by the water. If you watch long enough, you will see both of these processes repeated a second and even a third time. Can it be that some kind of hidden current of air at one time opens, and at another compresses, the mouth and jaws of

the spring, according as it rushes in on its introduction, or recedes on being expelled? We see that this happens in the case of narrow-necked vessels and objects of the same kind, with an orifice that is not wide, and is not immediately open to the contents. For these, too, though they be turned over, or inclined, check the passage of what they pour forth, with a number of gulps, as it were, like the struggles of some resisting spirit. Or, is the nature of this spring the same as that of the ocean; and in the same way as the latter ebbs and flows, is this small stream alternately drawn back and sent forth? Or, again, like rivers which on their way to the sea are driven back by adverse winds and an opposing tide, so is there something which repels the free course of this spring? Or is it that in its hidden ducts there is a regular reservoir, and that while this is collecting what has been exhausted, the stream is sent forth smaller and slower; when it has collected it, swifter and larger? Or, again, is there some sort of mysterious and hidden equipoise * which, when it is emptied, raises and elicits the spring; when it is full, delays and throttles it? Pray do you examine into the causes (as you are capable of doing) of this singular phenomenon. For my part, it is enough if I made sufficiently clear the effects.

* It is well remarked by Doering that Pliny himself, by his language, admits that he attaches no very clear meaning to the terms which he uses here. We need not, therefore, strain ourselves in useless efforts to get out a very precise sense. Still, the general sense is clear enough.

BOOK V.

(I.)

To Annius Severus.

A legacy has fallen to me, a small one, but more agreeable to me than the largest. "Why more agreeable than the largest?"

Pomponia Galla, having disinherited her son Asudius Curianus, had left me one of her heirs, and had given me for co-heirs Sertorius Severus, a man of Prætorian rank, and other distinguished Roman knights. Curianus begged me to present my share to him, and thus help him with a precedent.* At the same time, he promised that it should be secured to me by a tacit agreement to that effect. I replied that it was not in accordance with my character to do one thing openly and another thing in secret, besides that it was not quite respectable to make a present to one who was both rich and childless;† in short, that it would be of no service to him if I presented him with my share, but that it would be of service to him if I withdrew my claim to it, and that I was prepared to do so, if it were made plain to me that he had been disinherited unjustly. Upon which, said he, "Pray, investigate the matter." After a short hesitation, "I will do so," I replied, "for, indeed, I don't see why I should think myself of smaller account than I seem to you.‡ But please to bear this in mind at

* *I.e.*, for getting their shares from the other heirs. If Pliny had pretended to make a present of his legacy, it would have strengthened Curianus' case, or, rather, he seems to have thought so—erroneously, as Pliny directly tells him.

† Pliny would have exposed himself to the suspicion of playing the *captator*, or fortune-hunter, by this concession.

‡ I don't see why I should not trust my own impartiality.

starting, that my determination will not fail me (in case that should seem the honest conclusion) to pronounce in favour of your mother. "As you wish," said he, "for you will wish nothing but what is most equitable." I called to my counsels two men of the highest character in the State at that time, Corellius and Frontinus, and with these on either side of me took my seat in my chamber. Curianus urged what he considered made for him; I replied briefly (since there was no one else present to defend the honour of the deceased), then I retired to consult, and in accordance with the opinion of the council, "It seems to us, Curianus," said I, "that your mother had just grounds for being angry with you." After this he entered an action in the Centumviral Court against the remaining co-heirs, but not against me. The day of the trial was approaching. My co-heirs were desirous of coming to a settlement and compromising the matter, not from any distrust of their cause, but from fear of the times.* They were afraid of what they saw had happened to many, that as the result of a trial before the Centumviri they might be capitally indicted. And, in truth, there were among them some who might have had their friendship both for Gratilla and Rusticus cast in their teeth. They begged me to have a talk with Curianus. We met in the Temple of Concord. There, "If your mother," said I, "had left you heir to a fourth part of her property, pray, could you have complained?† What if, though she had instituted you heir to the whole, she had so diminished the amount by bequests that no more than a fourth part remained to you? You ought then to be satisfied if, after being disinherited by your mother, you receive a fourth part from her heirs, which, however, I will add to. You are aware that you entered no action against me, and that by this time two years have expired, so that I have obtained a right to my whole share in

* The times of Domitian. The expression is sufficiently explained by what follows.

† This would have been all he would have been legally entitled to. It was his *legitima portio*.

virtue of uninterrupted enjoyment. But that my co-heirs may find you more conformable, and in order that you may lose nothing by the respect you showed for me, I make you the same offer on account of my share."

I enjoyed the recompense not only of a good conscience, but of a good report. So now this very Curianus has left me a legacy, signalising this action of mine (which, if I do not flatter myself, was one in the ancient spirit) by a remarkable compliment.

All this I have written to you, because it is my habit to confer with you, just as with myself, about everything which either pleases or pains me; and, further, it seemed hard to defraud you, who are so attached to me, of the pleasure I was myself enjoying. Nor indeed am I such a sage that it makes no difference to me if such actions of mine as I believe to have been honourable are attended by some ratification and, if I may so speak, reward.

(2.)

To Calpurnius Flaccus.

I have received your splendid thrushes,* a present for which I can make no adequate return, either from the resources of the city, since I am at my Laurentine villa, or from the sea, owing to the dirty weather. You will receive then, in return, this *jejune* note, quite outspoken in its ingratitude, and which does not even imitate that famous cunning of Diomed in exchanging presents.† However, such is your good-nature, you will pardon it all the more readily in that it confesses it deserves no pardon.

* Or, fieldfares (*turdos*). I believe the modern Italians call all small birds of this kind "tordi."

† Alluding to the story in the Iliad where Diomed receives from Glaucus arms of gold in exchange for arms of brass.

(3.)

To Titius Aristo.

Many kind offices have you done me which have been welcome and agreeable to me, but this especially that you have thought it right not to conceal from me how, at your house, there has been a considerable and detailed discussion on the subject of my trifles in verse, which, owing to differences of opinion, was carried to a great length. There were some even, it seems, who, while not actually condemning these productions in themselves, yet found fault with *me*, in a kindly and outspoken way, for writing and reciting them. To these, at the risk of adding to my sin, I give this reply. I do sometimes compose trifles in verse, of a not very grave character: I own to it; and so too I listen to comedians, and go to see actors in farces, and read lyric poets, and appreciate productions in the style of Sotades;* sometimes, moreover, I indulge in laughter, in jokes, in play, and—to include in one term every species of harmless recreation—I am a man. Now, certainly, I cannot be offended at there being such an opinion of my character that persons should wonder at my writing these things who are ignorant of the fact that the most highly cultivated, most respectable, and most virtuous men have frequently scribbled in the same way. Yet from those who do know what authorities I follow, and how great they are, I am confident that I shall easily obtain leave to err, provided it be in company with those whose sportive productions, as well as their serious actions, may be imitated with approval. Shall I be afraid (I won't name any living person, for fear of exposing myself to any appearance of flattery), but shall I be afraid that that is not quite becoming to me which became M. Tullius, C. Calvus, Asinius Pollio, M. Messala, Q. Horten-

* A Greek poet who wrote loose verses.

sius, M. Brutus, L. Sulla, Q. Catulus, Q. Scævola, Ser. Sulpicius, M. Varro, Torquatus, nay the Torquati, C. Memmius, Lentulus Gætulicus, Annæus Seneca, Annæus Lucanus, and recently Verginius Rufus; or, if examples short of imperial * do not suffice, the Emperor Julius, the Emperor Augustus, the Emperor Nerva, Tiberius Cæsar? Nero, indeed, I pass over, though aware that a practice is not tainted by being sometimes shared in by bad people, but continues to be respectable in that it is frequently employed by the virtuous. Among the latter must be especially numbered P. Vergilius, Cornelius Nepos, and, before them, Accius and Ennius. These, it is true, were not Senators, but purity of character knows no distinction of ranks.

However, I recite too; and I do not know whether those who have been named did this or not. Very good. But *they* might well be content with their own judgment, while my self-consciousness is too modest for me to think a thing sufficiently perfect because it is approved by myself. Accordingly, I am led to recite by these incentives; first, because he who recites will apply himself with a somewhat keener attention to what he writes, out of regard for his audience; next, because he will be able to decide on points which are doubtful, by virtue as it were of the decision of a council. Again, he will receive many hints from many persons; and even if he do not receive them, he will ascertain the sentiments of individual hearers, by their expression, their eyes, a nod of the head, a gesture of the hands, their silence even—things which distinguish one's real opinion from mere complaisance by sufficiently evident signs. And accordingly, if by chance any one of those who were present as hearers shall care to read what he has heard, he will see that I have either altered or left out certain portions, perhaps actually in accordance with

* *Exempla privata. Privatus*, in Pliny's time, meant generally what we should call "a subject" as opposed to a sovereign. Originally, a person who was not in a public office.

his judgment, though he may himself have said nothing to me. But I am arguing all this as though it had been my habit to invite the public to a lecture-room instead of some friends into my chamber; yet to have friends in great numbers is a glory to many and a subject of reprehension to none.

(4.)

To Julius Valerianus.

Here is a matter, small in itself, but the prelude to no small one. Sollers, a man of Prætorian rank, petitioned the Senate to be allowed to establish periodical markets on his estate. Delegates from Vicentia spoke in opposition to this. Tuscilius Nominatus assisted them, and the cause was adjourned. At another meeting of the Senate, the people from Vicentia appeared without an advocate, saying, that they had been "deceived"—either a hasty expression, or else they really thought so. On being questioned by Nepos the Prætor as to whom they had instructed, they replied, the same person as before. Further questioned as to whether he had assisted them gratuitously on that occasion, they replied that he had received six thousand sesterces.* Had they given him anything beyond this? A thousand denarii,† they said. Nepos proposed that Nominatus should be summoned before the Senate. So much for that day; but as far as I can prognosticate, the matter will go further. For there are many things which, if they be only just touched or in the least set in motion, will imperceptibly spread themselves over a very wide surface.

I have pricked up your ears for you! How long and how cajolingly will you have to beg, to learn the sequel? if indeed, you do not antedate your coming to Rome on account of this very matter, preferring to see with your own eyes, rather than read about it.

* About £48. † About £35.

(5.)

To Nonius Maximus.

The death of G. Fannius has been announced to me, and this announcement has been to me a grievous shock, because, in the first place, I had a great affection for that man of taste and learning, and further, because I was in the habit of profiting by his judgment. He was indeed by nature acute, as well as practised by experience, and his sincerity made him ever ready. Besides these considerations, I am pained by the circumstances of his death: he has died with his old will in force, leaving out those whom he most regarded, and benefiting those with whom he was displeased.

This, however, might be in some way endurable; what is more serious is, that he has left an admirable work unfinished. For, though closely occupied by his practice at the bar, he was, nevertheless, engaged in writing of the ends of those who had been either put to death or banished by Nero. He had already completed three books, composed with taste and diligence, in pure Latin, and in a style midway between that of conversation and history; and he was the more desirous of getting the remaining books completed, in consequence of the previous ones having found a number of eager readers. To me, however, the deaths of those who are preparing something immortal seem, in all cases, untimely and immature. For as to those who, given over to pleasures, live as it were for the day, these complete every day the purpose for which they exist. Those, on the other hand, who contemplate posterity, and extend the memory of themselves by their works—to these no death can be other than sudden, since it always breaks off something which has been initiated.

Gaius Fannius, indeed, had long foreseen the event.

In a dream at night he seemed to himself to be reclining on his sofa, disposed in an attitude for study, with his case of books before him (as was his habit): presently he dreamt that Nero came in and seated himself on the couch, and, taking out the first book which he (Fannius) had published on the subject of his crimes, turned over the leaves to the end; then, that he did the same with the second and third books; finally, that he departed. He was greatly alarmed, interpreting this to mean that he was destined to come to an end of his writing at the place where Nero made an end of reading, and so it turned out. On recalling this, a feeling of commiseration comes over me to think what vigils, what labours, have been expended by him in vain. My mortal condition, my own writings, present themselves to my mind. Nor do I doubt that you too will be alarmed, by the same kind of reflection, for those things which you have in hand. So then, while life suffices, let us set to work, that death may have as little as possible to destroy.

(6.)

To Domitius Apollinaris.

I was much pleased with your care and solicitude on my account, when, on hearing that I was about to repair to my Tuscan estate, in summer, you dissuaded me from doing so at a time when you deem it unhealthy. It is true that the side of Tuscany, which extends along the coast, is unwholesome and pestilential; but this property of mine is a long way from the sea, and, moreover, underlies the Apennine range, the most salubrious of mountains. And further, that you may lay aside all fear on my account, let me tell you about the character of the climate, the situation of the country, and the charms of my villa. It will be a pleasure to you to hear of these things, and to me to relate them.

The climate in winter is cold and frosty, unfavourable and indeed fatal to myrtles and olive-trees, and everything else which delights in continuous warmth; yet it is tolerant of laurels, and in fact brings on very fine ones, sometimes, it is true, killing them off, yet not more frequently than happens in the neighbourhood of Rome. The summers are wonderfully soft, the air is always stirred by a kind of breath; yet it is more often breezy than windy. Hence, old men are numerous, you may see the grandfathers and great grandfathers of youths already grown, you may hear old stories and old folks' talk, and when you visit the place you may fancy yourself born in another age.

The lie of the country is charming: imagine a kind of amphitheatre of immense size, and such as nature alone can construct. A broad and spreading plain is surrounded by mountains; the mountains on their highest summits are crowned with lofty and venerable forests, and in these there is game in plenty and variety. Next to these are woods for cutting, following the downward slope of the mountain; and interspersed with them are rich and loamy knolls (indeed a stone does not readily present itself anywhere, even if you look for one) which do not yield in point of fertility to the flattest plains, and bring to maturity a rich harvest, though it be a somewhat late one. Below these, vineyards stretch along the whole side of the mountain, and present a uniform appearance far and wide. They are terminated, or fringed so to speak at the base, by shrubberies. Then come meadows and cornfields, fields which can be broken up only by the largest oxen and the strongest ploughs: the soil is so stiff and rises up in such huge clods when first cut into, that it is only by a course of nine ploughings that it can finally be reduced. The meadows, gemmed with flowers, rear the trifolium and other kinds of herbage always soft and tender, and in a manner new; everything being matured by never-failing streams. Yet, where there is the greatest

quantity of water, there is no marsh, because the land, being on an incline, pours into the Tiber all the moisture which it receives and does not absorb. That river runs through the middle of the estate, it is of a size to carry ships, and conveys the whole of our produce to Rome, that is to say, in winter and spring; in summer it is lowered, and leaves the name of a large river to a dry channel; in autumn it resumes its character. You would be greatly charmed if you viewed this situation from the mountains; you would fancy yourself looking not at so much country, but at a kind of landscape painted with the most exquisite beauty: such is the variety, such the harmonious disposition, which refreshes the eye wherever it turns.

My villa commands as good a view of what lies under the hill as though it were on the summit; so gentle and gradual is the unperceived rise to it that you find you have made an ascent, without knowing that you have been ascending. At its back it has the Apennines, but some way off. From these it enjoys breezes, however calm and unruffled the day, not sharp or cutting ones, however, but such as are softened and broken by the mere space they have passed over. It has, for the most part, a southerly aspect, and invites—if I may so speak—into a broad and slightly projecting cloister the summer sun from the sixth hour, the winter sun rather earlier. In this cloister there are several apartments, and a hall, too, after the ancient fashion. In front of the cloister is a variegated terrace walk, with borders of box, then a descent to a sloping garden bank, with forms of animals cut out in box facing each other. On the flat ground is an acanthus so soft that I had almost called it liquid. Round this is a walk, enclosed by evergreens planted close, and cut into different shapes. Beyond this is a promenade in the form of a ring, which encircles the variously shaped boxes and the low trimmed shrubs. All this is protected by a wall covered and concealed by a sloping hedge of box. Then comes a green expanse not less worthy to be viewed for its natural than

what has been above mentioned for its artificial beauties. There are fields further on and many other green meads and coppices.

From the extremity of the cloister a dining-room projects. Through its folding doors it looks out on the end of the terrace walk, and straight on the green expanse and a large extent of country; from its windows, in one direction, it commands the side of the terrace walk and the projecting part of the villa; in the other, the trees in the riding-school and their foliage. Opposite to about the middle of the cloister, there is a receding building which encloses a small court shaded by four plane-trees. Among these a fountain gushes forth from an orifice of marble, refreshing with its gentle spray the plane-trees which are disposed around it, and everything underlying them. There is in this building a sleeping-apartment, which excludes daylight and loud noises and even sounds; and adjoining this a dining-parlour for every-day use and the reception of friends. It commands the small court of which I spoke and the cloister, and the same prospect as that from the cloister. There is also another saloon which enjoys the verdure and shade of a plane-tree close to it, adorned with marble to the height of the window openings, and above this with wall-paintings which in beauty do not yield to the marble; they represent trees, and birds sitting on the trees. There is a small fountain in this room, and a basin to the fountain; around it a number of jets combine to produce a most delightful murmur. At the angle of the cloister a large saloon faces the dining-room. Some of its windows look down on the terrace walk, and others on the paddocks, but first of all upon the piscina, which is an attraction to and underlies the windows, and is a pleasant object to the ear as well as the eye, for the water rushes down from a height and foams as it strikes on the marble bottom. This same saloon is extremely warm in winter time, owing to its being penetrated by a great quantity of sunlight. A heating-room is attached to it, which, on

cloudy days, supplies the place of the sun by the warm air it pours in. Next to this a roomy and cheerful dressing-room conducts you to the cold-bathing apartment, where there is a large and sheltered plunging-bath. If you wish to swim more at your ease, or in warmer water, there is a piscine in the court and a reservoir hard by, where you may brace yourself afresh if you have had too much of the warmth. With the cold bath-room is connected one of medium temperature, which is particularly favoured by the sun; this is still more the case with the hot bath-room, for it is projecting. In this there are three tiers of baths, two enjoying the sun, the third less warm, but not less light. Over the dressing-room is the tennis-court, large enough for several kinds of games and several parties of players. Not far from the bath is a staircase which leads to a covered cloister, first of all, however, to three parlours. One overlooks the little court in which are the four plane-trees, another the paddocks, the third the vineyards, so that each has a different aspect as well as prospect. At the upper end of the covered cloister is a saloon cut out of the cloister itself, which commands the riding-school, the vineyards, and the mountains. Adjoining this is another saloon exposed to the sun, especially in winter. Next comes an apartment which connects the villa with the riding-school. Such are the appearance and the arrangement of the house in front.

At the side is a covered cloister for summer use, situated on a rising ground, which seems not so much to look upon the vineyards as to be touching them. In the centre of this, a dining-room receives a very wholesome air from the Apennine valleys; behind, it admits, as one may say, the vineyards through windows of great size, and the same vineyards, through its folding doors, viewed along the cloister. On the side of this dining-room, on which there are no windows, a staircase serves for introducing what is necessary for the repast, by a more private entrance. At

the end is a saloon, to which the cloister itself furnishes a prospect no less agreeable than the vineyards.

Underneath is another cloister, which resembles an underground one. In summer it is extremely cool, and, sufficiently supplied with air of its own, is neither in want of nor admits the external atmosphere. After the two cloisters, at the point where the dining-room ends, a colonnade begins, with a winter temperature before mid-day and a summer one in the afternoon. This forms the approach to two suites of rooms, in one of which are four saloons, and in the other three; and these, as the sun goes round, enjoy either the sunshine or the shade.

The disposition and charms of the villa are, however, far surpassed by the riding-ground, an open expanse which presents itself in its entirety to your eyes the moment you enter it. It is surrounded by plane-trees, and these are clothed with ivy, so that the tops of them are green with their own leaves, and the lower parts with the leaves of the other. The ivy creeps over trunk and branches, and links together neighbouring planes in its passage. The interstices are filled by box. The exterior boxes are encircled by laurels which add their shade to that of the planes. The straight line of the riding-ground is broken at the extreme end by a semicircle, so as to present a different appearance. This is surrounded and protected by cypresses, and thus darkened and obscured by a deeper shade; but the inner circles (for there are several of them) enjoy the clearest day. Hence, too, they bear roses, and produce a diversion from the cool shade by their pleasant sunniness.

At the end of these winding ways, with their varied and diversified character, comes the straight road again, and not one only, for a number of paths are separated from each other by intervening boxes. At one point a lawn, at another point the box itself comes in, cut into a thousand shapes, sometimes into those of letters, which give you here the name of the owner, there that of the artist; sometimes every other one rises in the form of a small

pyramid, and its neighbour has an apple-tree planted in the middle of it, an unexpected imitation as it were of the rustic introduced into an object which smacks a good deal of the town. A space in the middle is ornamented on both sides by dwarf plane-trees. Beyond, there is an acanthus, pliant and flexible in all directions—then more figures and more names. At the top is a semicircular seat of white marble, shaded by a vine; the vine is supported by four small columns of Carystian marble. From this seat water gushes forth through tiny pipes, just as if it were set in motion by the weight of the persons reclining. It is collected in the hollowed rock, and deposited in a polished marble basin, being so regulated by a hidden contrivance, as to fill without overflowing it. My pic-nic tray and the heavier part of my dinner-service are placed on the edge of the basin, the lighter parts make the round of the water, floating in the form of little boats and birds. On the other side is a fountain which projects water and receives it again; for, after being propelled to a height, it falls back on the same place, being absorbed and emitted through orifices which communicate with each other.

Right opposite the seat is a saloon which reflects as much ornament on the seat as it derives from it. It is resplendent with marble, its folding-doors project into the shrubbery, and from its upper and lower windows it looks down upon and up to other shrubberies. Next comes a retreating cabinet, a part as it were and yet not a part of the saloon. Here there is a couch, and windows on every side, yet the light is obscured by the depth of the shade; for a luxurious vine scrambles and mounts up the whole building to the roof. You may lie here just as if you were in a grove, the only difference being that you will not feel the showers as you would in a grove. Here, too, a fountain rises and immediately disappears. At many points marble seats are disposed, as resting to the weary walker as the saloon itself could be. Small fountains adjoin the

seats. Throughout the whole of the riding-ground there are gurgling streams introduced, by means of pipes, following the lead of man's hand; by the aid of these the various shrubs are watered at different times and sometimes all of them together.

I should long since have avoided the imputation of loquacity, had I not determined to go round every corner of the place with you in my letter. Nor was I afraid that you would be wearied with reading of that which you would not weary of seeing in person; especially as you might rest between whiles, if so disposed, and laying down the letter, often take a seat, so to speak. Besides I have indulged my partiality; for I am partial to what was in great part laid out by myself or completed by me after it had been laid out. To sum up (for why not freely inform you of my opinion, it may be my mistaken one?), I deem it the first duty of a writer to read over his title and from time to time ask himself what it was that he undertook to write about, feeling sure that if he only sticks to his subject he will not be tedious, while he will be very tedious indeed if he goes in quest of or drags in any foreign matter. You see the number of lines in which Homer and Virgil describe, the one the arms of Æneas, the other those of Achilles; yet each of them is brief, because he is only doing what he proposed to do. You see how Aratus follows up and catalogues even the tiniest stars: yet he observes the bounds: here is no digression on his part, it is the very work he has to do. Similarly, in my case (to compare small things with great), when I am endeavouring to set the whole of my villa before your eyes, provided I say nothing alien to the subject and as it were out of the way, it is not the letter which gives the description, but the villa which is described, that is of great size. However, to return to my starting-point, for fear of being justly censured in accordance with my own rule, if I go further with this digression of mine; you now know why I prefer my Tuscan property to those at Tusculum,

Tibur, and Præneste. For in addition to what has been mentioned, the retirement there is more complete, more snug, and consequently less liable to interruption. There is no need to put on one's toga; nobody wants you in the neighbourhood; everything is calm and quiet; and this in itself adds to the healthiness of the locality no less than the brightness of the sky and the clearness of the atmosphere. Here, both mentally and bodily, I am in especial vigour; for my mind I exercise by study, and my body by the chase. My household too are nowhere in better health. Up to this time, at any rate, I have not lost there a single person among those whom I brought out with me (may no harm come of my saying so !). May the gods continue for the future this, which is a joy to me and a glory to the place.

(7.)

To Calvisius Rufus.

It is plain that a community can neither be constituted heir-at-law, nor take preferentially. Yet Saturninus, who has left us his executors,* has given a fourth part of his property to our community, † and subsequently, in lieu of this fourth, a preferential legacy of four hundred thousand sesterces. ‡ This, if you look to the law, is null and void; if to the intention of the deceased, it is valid and not to be upset. Now, to my way of thinking, the intention of the deceased (I am apprehensive how the lawyers may take what I am going to say) is of higher import than the letter of the law, particularly in the case of what it was intended should go to our common birth-place. Could I, who have bestowed on it eleven hundred thousand sesterces § out of my own purse, refuse to this community

* *Heredes.* The sense of executorship being prominent here, I have preferred the word which signifies it.

† *Reipublicae nostrae*, to our commonwealth (commune) the corporation of the town.

‡ About £3200.

§ About £8800. *Undecies:* another reading is *sedecies.*

a windfall of four hundred thousand, or little more than a third of the above amount? I am sure that you, in particular, will not be opposed to my judgment, seeing that like an admirable citizen you cherish this same birthplace of ours. I should wish then that, the next time the town-council come together, you would point out to them the law of the case, briefly however and quietly; then add that we make them a present of the four hundred thousand sesterces, in accordance with Saturninus's injunctions. His be the gift, his the liberality; let our part be styled compliance merely. I have desisted from writing all this publicly, first because I remembered that the closeness of our friendship, and the strength of your own perspicuity, would make it your duty as well as put it in your power to speak for me as well as yourself; next because I feared that the proper mean, which it will be easy for you to preserve when speaking, might seem not to have been observed in a letter. For a speech receives its tone from the expression, the gestures, the voice itself, which accompany it; while a letter, being destitute of all such commendations, is exposed to the malignity of its interpreters.

(8.)

To Titinius Capito.

You advise me to write a history, and you are not singular in giving this advice. Many persons, at many times, have urged me to the same effect; and for my part I am willing to do so, not from any confidence that the work will be easy to me (it would be rash to suppose this, unless one had tried), but because it seems in a high degree noble not to allow those to perish who have merited immortality, and to extend the fame of others in company with one's own. Moreover, to me there is no inducement so strong as the love and longing for an enduring fame, a longing in every way worthy of a man, especially of one

who is conscious of no guilt, and hence does not dread being remembered by posterity. So by day, and night too, I ponder—

"By what fair means to raise *my* grovelling name."

For this would satisfy my wishes. The rest would be beyond my wishes—

"To flit a victor through the lips of men." *
"Yet, oh!" †——

However, the former suffices me; and this, historical composition seems almost alone to promise. For an oration or a poem meets with small favour, unless it be in the loftiest style, whereas a history pleases in whatever way it is written; since men are by nature inquisitive, and charmed at being made acquainted with events in the barest fashion, being indeed often led away by even small stories and tales. In my case, I am further impelled to this pursuit by an example in my own family; my maternal uncle, who was also my father by adoption, wrote histories, and with the most religious care too. Now, I find it stated by the sages that it is a noble thing to follow in the footsteps of one's ancestors, provided only the way they have gone before you was the right one. Why hesitate? I have pleaded in great and important causes. These speeches of mine (though with but slender hopes from them) I propose to revise, lest the results of such great toil should perish with me, if I fail to bestow this remaining attention on them; for to those who take account of posterity, whatever is not perfected is as though it had never been begun. You will say, "You can rewrite your speeches and compose a history at the same time." I wish I could! But both are matters of such

* These two lines are from the third Georgic.

† *Quamquam O!* "Yet, O!" from the boat-race in the fifth Æneid. Mnestheus, in danger of being distanced, cries out—

Non jam prima peto Mnestheus neque vincere certo,
Quamquam O!

"I no longer seek the first place—and yet! and yet!"

importance that it is more than enough to accomplish one of them. I began to speak in the Forum in my nineteenth year, and only now perceive, yet still through a mist, what is required of an orator. What if to such a burden a fresh one be added? No doubt an oration and a history have much that is common; they have, however, still more numerous diversities, and precisely in those points which seem to be common to them. Both are in the way of narration, but in a different style. In the one case, simple, common, every-day language is mostly suitable; in the other, there should be everywhere profundity, brilliancy, and elevation. The one is in general all bone, muscle, and sinew; the other requires to be set off by fleshly integuments and, if I may so express it, a flowing crest. The one pleases, above all, by its vigour, its incisiveness, its persistency; the other by its expansiveness and gentleness, and even sweetness. In short, the language is different; the tone and the style of composition are different. For there is a wide distinction, as Thucydides has it, between "a permanent possession" and "a contest for a prize." An oration is the latter, a history is the former. For these reasons, I am not tempted to mix up and confound two matters so dissimilar, and which their very importance distinguishes from each other; fearing that I should lose my head in such a medley, so to speak, and be found writing in one place what I ought to be writing in the other. So I must, in the interim (to adhere to my own phraseology), ask the Court for an adjournment. Do you, however, at once consider what epoch I had best attack. An ancient one, written of by others? Here the materials for investigation would be at hand, but the collation of them would be arduous.* Or a period as yet unhandled and recent? Here the risk of offence would be great, the success to be obtained slight. For besides that, in view of the great

* *Onerosa collatio.* Some take this to mean, "I should have to stand an unpleasant comparison with former writers." The plain sense, however, is that given in the text.

corruption of mankind, there are more subjects for censure than for praise, there is this, that, where you praise, you will be said to be niggardly, and where you censure, to be extravagant; though you may have been most lavish in the former case, and most sparing in the latter. But these considerations do not restrain me. I have sufficient courage on behalf of the truth. What I ask is that you would prepare the way for the undertaking you advise, by selecting a subject, lest, now that I am quite prepared to write, there should arise afresh some new and valid ground for hesitation and delay.

(9.)

To Rufus.

I had gone down to the Basilica Julia, to listen to those whom it was my duty to reply to at the next adjournment of the Court. The judges were sitting, the decemvirs had come in, the advocates were in full view, there was a long silence. At length came a message from the Prætor. The Centumviri were dismissed, and proceedings suspended for the day; to my delight, who am never so well prepared as not to be rejoiced at a delay. The reason for the adjournment was that Nepos the Prætor is conducting an investigation in accordance with the law. He had put forth a short edict, in which he warned prosecutors and defendants as well, that he should carry out the provisions of the Senate's decree. The decree in question was appended to the edict. It ordered everybody who was engaged in legal proceedings to make oath before litigating, that he had not given, promised, or guaranteed anything to any one in return for his advocacy. Such were the words, and a number of others besides, by which the sale and barter of advocacy were forbidden. However, at the termination of the suit, it permitted money to be given, to the extent of ten thousand sesterces.* The Prætor who presides

* About £80.

over Centumviral causes was perplexed by this action of Nepos, and, with the view of deliberating whether he should follow the precedent, gave us an unexpected holiday. Meanwhile, the edict of Nepos is either carped at or praised through the whole city. Many say, "So then we have found a man to make crooked things straight! What? were there no Prætors before this one? Pray, who is this personage who purifies public morals?" Others retort, "He has done perfectly right. Before assuming office, he took cognisance of the law, and read the Senate's decrees; now, he checks bargains which are disgraceful in the extreme, and will not allow what is a most noble avocation to be the subject of barter." Such are the opinions expressed, which will prevail on one side or the other, according to the event. For though it is altogether unfair, yet it is a received usage, that designs whether creditable or scandalous, according as they turn out successful or unsuccessful, are proportionately either approved or blamed. Hence often the self-same actions are styled by the denomination, now of prudent zeal, now of self-seeking, sometimes of boldness, and at other times of insanity.

(10.)

To Suetonius Tranquillus.

Pray at length discharge the engagement entered into by my hendecasyllabic verses, which guaranteed our common friends some writings from your pen. These verses are being daily called upon and dunned, and there is some danger of their being served with a notice to produce.* I myself am given to hesitation in the matter of publishing, but you have surpassed even my dilatoriness and tardiness. Accordingly either break off delay at once, or have a care lest these same writings, which my hendecasyllables

* He is in these opening sentences jocularly using the language of the courts.

can't get out of you by caresses, be extorted by the severe handling of my iambic trimeters.* Your work is perfected and completed: your critical file is no longer bright; on the contrary, it is being worn with use. Suffer me to see your title, suffer me to hear that the volumes of my friend Tranquillus are being copied out and read and sold. It is right, when our love is so mutual, that I should derive from you the same pleasure as you enjoy from me.

(11.)

To Calpurnius Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

I have received your letter, from which I learn that you have dedicated to the use of the public a very handsome arcade, in your own name and that of your son; also that, on the following day, you promised a sum of money for the ornamentation of its doors, in order that your generosity might take a fresh departure by crowning what had gone before. I rejoice, first of all, on account of your own glory, some portion of which must, in consequence of our connection, redound to my credit; next, because I see that the memory of my father-in-law is being prolonged by public constructions of so noble a character; lastly, because our native place is flourishing, and while it would be a pleasure to me that it should be adorned by any one, it is a subject of the greatest delight that this should be done by you in particular. It only remains for me to pray the gods that they may continue this disposition to you, and give you as long a time as possible for its exercise. For I am sure it will happen that as soon as you have completed what you lately promised, you will begin upon something else. Generosity indeed when once set in motion is unable to stand still, and the very exercise of it enhances its charms.

* *Scazontes*, usually employed in satire.

(12.)

To Terentius Scaurus.

Intending to read aloud a short oration, which I have thoughts of publishing, I invited some friends, in order to excite my diffidence, but only a few, in order to hear the truth. For I have two reasons for reciting: one, that I may be stimulated by apprehension; the other, that I may be admonished in case anything chances to escape me, as being my own work. I was gratified in my desire, and found persons to place their advice at my disposal. Further, on my own account, I noted some things for correction; and have corrected the book and sent it to you. You will learn the subject from the title, the rest the book itself will explain; and indeed the time has now come when it must accustom itself to be intelligible without any prefatory remarks. Please to write me your opinion of the whole as well as of the parts. For I shall be either more cautious in the way of keeping it back, or more emboldened to publish it, according as your authority shall be added in one direction or the other.

(13.)

To Valerianus.

You ask of me, and I promised in case you asked, to write you word of the issue of Nepos's proposal with regard to Tuscilius Nominatus.* Nominatus was introduced, and pleaded his own cause in person, no one appearing to prosecute; for the agents from Vicentia not only refrained from pressing him, but actually assisted him. The substance of his defence was that his courage, and not his honour, had failed him in his office of advocate; that he had come down with the intention of speaking and had even been seen in court; that he had subsequently retired, frightened by the observations of his friends; for they had

* See Letter 4 of this book.

advised him not to offer such a pertinacious resistance to the wishes of a Senator (especially in the Senate) whose contention seemed no longer about markets merely, but concerning his own influence, reputation, and dignity; that, otherwise, he would be exposed to still greater odium than was recently the case. And in truth, on the former occasion, some cries had been raised against him, though only by a few however, as he left the court.* He supplemented all this with prayers and a quantity of tears: indeed throughout the whole of his speech this practised pleader took pains to appear rather as one entreating forgiveness (certainly the more popular and safer course), than as if defending himself. He was acquitted on the motion of Afranius Dexter, consul elect, the substance of which was to the effect that, while Nominatus would certainly have done better if he had carried through the cause of the Vicetians in the same spirit as that in which he had undertaken it; yet, as he had fallen into this kind of error with no fraudulent intent, and was proved to have committed nothing worthy of punishment, he ought to be discharged, on condition of returning his fees to the Vicetians. This was assented to by all, with the exception of Fabius Aper, who proposed that Nominatus should be disbarred for five years, and though he could not carry any one by his authority, he remained fixed in his opinion. More than this, after citing the law on the subject of convening the Senate, he insisted that Dexter, who had originated the opposite proposal, should make oath "that what he had proposed was in the interest of the State." Though this demand was in accordance with law, yet several cried out against it as seeming to charge corrupt motives on the mover. However, before the votes of the Senate were given, Nigrinus, a tribune of the people, read out an

* *Adclamatum erat exeunti.* Doering, taking *adclamatum* in its more usual sense, understands this to mean that several persons on the former occasion applauded Nominatus for leaving the court, *i.e.*, for throwing up his brief. But this is very roundabout. And, moreover, *adclamare* is not so unusual as D. thinks, in an unfavourable sense.

eloquent and weighty memorial in which he complained that the office of advocate was sold, that even the interests of clients were fraudulently sold, that corrupt engagements were entered into in the matter of trials, and that large and fixed incomes derived from the spoils of citizens had replaced the pursuit of glory. He read out the titles of certain laws, and appealed to the authority of decrees of the Senate; in conclusion he declared that our most excellent Prince ought to be requested, since the laws and the decrees of the Senate were thus contemned, to take upon himself to remedy these monstrous abuses. After a few days, came a rescript from the Emperor, severe yet moderate withal. You can read the original: it is in the Gazette.

How glad I am that in conducting my cases I have always declined, not only compacts, presents, and fees, but even trifling cadeaux. To be sure it is one's duty to shun what is dishonourable, not as being unlawful, but as being shameful; yet at the same time it is pleasant to see a thing publicly prohibited which one has never permitted oneself. Probably, nay, certainly, the credit of this resolve of mine will be smaller, its fame dimmer, when every one will have to do from necessity what I did of my own accord. Meanwhile, I enjoy real pleasure when some of my friends jocosely call me "a diviner," others declare that "a check has been put on my plundering and avarice!"

(14.)

To Pontius.

I was rusticating at Comum when it was announced to me that Cornutus Tertullus was appointed Curator of the Via Æmilia. It is impossible to express the pleasure experienced by me, both on his and my account; on his because, though he may be, as certainly he is, far removed from every kind of ambition, yet an honour spontaneously conferred must needs be agreeable to him; on mine,

because the office entrusted to me gives me no inconsiderable additional pleasure when I see a similar one bestowed on Cornutus.* For, to be advanced in dignity is not more grateful than to be put on a par with good men. And where is there a better man than Cornutus? Or a more virtuous? Or one more closely moulded to the pattern of antiquity in every species of good repute? All which was known to me not from fame only—great and merited of itself as is the fame which he enjoys—but from a long and intimate experience of him. We love in unison, and have loved in unison, almost all those of either sex whom our epoch has produced as worthy of imitation; a partnership in friendships which has bound us together in the closest intimacy. To this has been superadded the tie of a public connection; he was, as you know, my colleague (as though accorded to my prayers) in the Præfectureship of the treasury, and also in the Consulship. Then it was that I thoroughly ascertained what sort of man, and how great a man he was, as I followed him in the capacity of magistrate, and venerated him in that of a parent; which was what he deserved, not so much from maturity of years as of character.

For these reasons, I congratulate myself as well as him, and on public as much as on private grounds: since now at last men's virtues advance them, not as formerly to posts of danger, but to posts of honour. But my letter would never end, if I were to indulge my joy. I must rather turn to what I was doing here when the announcement reached me. I was with my wife's grandfather, and her aunt, with friends long desired; I was going the round of my farms, listening to a number of rustic complaints, looking over accounts, against the grain, and superficially, (for very different are the papers and the writings with which I am conversant) I had, moreover, begun to make preparations for returning to Rome, being bound by the narrow limits of my leave of absence, and this very news

* Pliny was at this time a Commissioner of the Tiber.

which reaches my ears of the office conferred on Cornutus reminds me of my own. I trust your Campania will be sending you back about the same time, that, on my return to town, no day may be lost to our friendly intercourse.

(15.)

To Arrius Antoninus.

It is on trying to imitate your verses, that I experience most strongly how excellent they are. For just as painters can seldom make a portrait of a lovely and exquisite face that does not fall short of the original, so do I trip and fall away from such an archetype. All the more then do I exhort you to favour us with as many as possible of these productions, such as all will be eager, and very few, if any, will be able to imitate.

(16.)

To Marcellinus.

I write this to you in great distress. The younger daughter of our friend Fundanus is dead. She was a young lady than whom I never saw a livelier or a more lovable, or one more worthy not only of a longer life, but wellnigh of immortality. She had not yet completed her fourteenth year, and already she had the judgment of a woman of advanced age, and the gravity of a matron, and yet girlhood's sweetness, too, coupled with maidenly reserve. How she was wont to hang on her father's neck! How lovingly and, at the same time, modestly she used to embrace us, her father's friends! How she cherished her nurses, and governors, and tutors, according to their several offices! How studiously and intelligently she read! How sparing and guarded she was in her recreations! With what self-restraint, what patience, aye, what intrepidity did she bear her last illness! She obeyed the doctors, encouraged her sister and her father, and sustained herself, after her

bodily strength had failed, by the force of her will. This lasted her to the end, and was not shaken either by the length of her illness or by the fear of death, so as to leave us still more numerous and weighty grounds for our regret and our sorrow. What an altogether sad and premature decease! And the time of her death was still more cruel than death itself. For she was already betrothed to an admirable young man; already a day had been fixed upon for the nuptials; we, the guests, were already invited. What joy turned to what mourning! I cannot express in words how my soul was wounded on hearing Fundanus himself—in the way that grief is fruitful in discovering aggravations—ordering that the sum he had intended to pay for dresses and pearls and jewellery should be laid out on incense and unguents and perfumes. He to be sure is a man of culture and philosophy, having devoted himself from his earliest years to profound studies and sciences; but now he despises all the topics which he has so often listened to and himself uttered, and, throwing to the winds the other virtues, is engrossed in his paternal affection. You will pardon, you will even praise him, if you think of what he has lost. He has lost a daughter who resembled him in character no less than in countenance and expression, who was a marvellously faithful copy of her father in all respects. If, then, you should chance to be writing to him on the subject of a sorrow so legitimate, mind and give him some consolation, not in the chiding style, not too heroic, but gentle and friendly. The lapse of time which will have intervened will do much towards making him receive this more readily; for just as a wound, still raw, shrinks from the hands of those who would treat it, yet afterwards submits to and itself invites them, so a mental sorrow, when fresh, rejects and flies from consolations, yet presently it yearns for them, and is calmed by their gentle application.

(17.)

To Spurinna.

I know how eagerly you favour the polite arts, and how great is your joy whenever young nobles do anything worthy of their ancestors. So I make the more haste to tell you that to-day I formed part of Calpurnius Piso's audience. He recited his "Legends of the Stars," assuredly an erudite and brilliant theme. It was treated in elegiacs, flowing and tender and smooth, elevated too when the occasion required; for with much aptness and variety the tone was at one time raised, and lowered at another. He changed from the lofty to the subdued, from brevity to copiousness, from gay to grave, always with the same happy talent. And all this was enhanced by the sweetest of voices, and the voice itself by his modesty. His face was suffused with many a blush and much anxiety, great charms in one who recites. In truth, I know not how it is, but in literary pursuits timidity is more becoming to men than assurance. However, no more: though I would fain say more, and the rather that all this is so handsome on the part of a young man, and so rare on that of a noble.

At the close of the recitation, after bestowing a long and hearty embrace on the youth, I incited him by praises —which are the strongest stimulus to encouragement— to go on as he had begun, so as to exhibit, for the guidance of his descendants, the same bright light which his ancestors had exhibited to him. I congratulated his excellent mother, and his brother as well, who obtained no less credit from that audience for his fraternal affection than the other son for his eloquence; in such a marked way did his apprehension, first of all, for his brother while in the act of reciting, and presently his joy, reveal itself. The gods grant that I may often have such news to tell you! for the age in which we live has my best wishes that it be not sterile and effete; and I earnestly hope that our nobles

may have something in their houses to be admired besides those ancestral images which in the case of these youths seem now to me to be silently applauding and exhorting and—which is of sufficient account for the glory of both —*acknowledging* them.

(18.)

To Calpurnius Macer.

'Tis well with me, because it is well with you. You have the company of your wife and of your son; you are in the enjoyment of the sea, the fresh springs, verdure, the country, and your delicious villa. How can I doubt that it is delicious, since it was the resting-place of one who was happier before he attained the summit of felicity.* For my part I am engaged both in the chase and in literature, on my Tuscan property, sometimes alternately, sometimes doing both together.† Nor can I yet pronounce which is the more difficult—to catch something, or to write something.

(19.)

To Paulinus.

Seeing how tenderly you govern your household, I shall the more unreservedly confess to you the indulgence with which I treat my own. There are always present to my mind that Homeric expression—

"He was as a father mild,"

and that term of ours, "Paterfamilias." Yet, were my nature harsher and rougher, it would be softened by the ill-health of my freed-man Zosimus, to whom I am bound to exhibit increased consideration, in that he at present stands in greater need of it. He is an honest and oblig-

* Who this was is not known. Sulla according to some, Nerva according to others. In any case, some man had inhabited the villa, who (says Pliny) was happier in his retirement than when he had attained what, to vulgar eyes, is the summit of earthly felicity.

† Cf. Book I., Letter 6.

ing man, and a lettered one; indeed his art—and he might as it were be so ticketed *—is that of a comedian, and he excels in it. For he delivers himself with spirit, and judgment, appositely and indeed gracefully. He is moreover a clever performer on the guitar, beyond what is required of a comedian. Besides, he reads aloud orations and histories and poetry so well that you would think he had learnt to do nothing else. I have explained this to you carefully, that you might the better know what numerous and what agreeable services he has, in his single person, rendered me. To this must be added my affection for the man, now of long standing and which his very perils have augmented. For nature has so ordered it, that nothing excites and inflames love so much as the fear of bereavement, a fear which I suffer on his account, and not for the first time. For, some years ago, while in the act of delivering himself with effort and emphasis, he spat blood, and in consequence of this having been sent by me to Egypt, he returned lately restored to health, after his long peregrination. Subsequently on putting too great a strain on his voice, for some successive days, though reminded by a slight cough of his old infirmity, he spat blood afresh. For which reason I have decided to send him to the estate which you possess at Forum Julii; † having often heard you say that the climate is salubrious and also that there is milk there particularly suited for this kind of cure. I would beg you therefore to write to your people, that the establishment and the house may be open to him; also that they may contribute to his expenses, if he wants anything; he will, however, want but little, for he is so economical and temperate that he restricts himself most frugally not only in the matter of indulgences, but even in things necessary for his health. I will give him at his departure a sum sufficient to carry him to your place.

* An allusion to the ticket hung round the necks of slaves for sale, giving their character and qualities.

† Now, "Fréjus," in the South of France.

(20.)

To Ursus.

Once more the Bithynians! A short time after the affair of Julius Bassus,* they further impeached Rufus Varenus formerly their pro-consul, Varenus whom they had lately themselves applied for, as well as obtained, as their advocate against Bassus. On being introduced into the Senate, they demanded a commission of inquiry. Varenus asked that he, as well as they, might be allowed to compel the attendance of witnesses for the purposes of his defence. The Bithynians demurring to this, the point was debated. I pleaded for Varenus, and not without result, but whether well or ill my book † will show. For in the case of speeches in court, fortune carries the day, either way; memory, voice, gesture, the particular occasion, finally one's affection for, or else detestation of the accused, these are things which greatly detract from, or add to, the commendation they receive; whereas a book excites neither offence nor partiality, and is independent of accidents whether fortunate or adverse.

Fonteius Magnus, one of the Bithynians, replied to me with great abundance of words and much paucity of matter. In most of the Greeks, as in him, volubility takes the place of copiousness: such long and dreary periods do they pour forth at a breath just like a torrent. Hence Julius Candidus says, rather neatly, that eloquence is one thing and loquacity another.‡ For eloquence is the gift of scarcely here and there one, nay, if we are to believe M. Antonius, of no man; but this which Candidus calls

* See Book VI. Letter 9.

† The book which he sends with this letter. The pamphlet containing his published speech, as we should term it.

The original here is *egi pro Vareno non sine eventu: nam bene an male liber indicabit*, where the force of *nam* can only be expressed by amplifying the English rendering. "I spoke for Varenus, and (I will just say) not without result; *for*, whether well or ill, the book itself will indicate."

‡ *Aliud esse eloquentiam, aliud loquentiam.* The jingle of words cannot be rendered in English.

loquacity is the special gift of many, and of the most impudent rascals in particular.

Next day Homullus made a clever, spirited, and well-turned speech for Varenus, and Nigrinus replied to him concisely, with force and elegance. Acilius Rufus, consul-elect, moved that the commission of inquiry should be accorded to the Bithynians, while he passed over the application of Varenus in silence. This was a mode of refusing it. Cornelius Priscus, of consular rank, was for granting the request of accusers and accused, and he got a majority. He carried a point which is neither provided for by law nor particularly sanctioned by custom, but a just one nevertheless. *Why* it is just, I shall refrain from proving in a letter, in order that you may wish for the speech. For if what Homer says be true, that

> "Novel lays attract our ravished ears,
> But old the mind with inattention hears," *

I must have a care that the charm of novelty and the bloom which are the principal attractions of that small oration be not prematurely gathered by my letter.

(21.)

To Saturninus.

Your letter affected me in different ways, for its contents were partly pleasant and partly sad. What was pleasant was the announcement that you are kept in town. "I don't wish to be," say you; but *I* wish it: moreover, the promise that you would have a reading immediately on my arrival. Thank you for waiting for me. The sad part was about Julius Valens lying dangerously ill; though even this is hardly so, if it be judged from the point of his own advantage, since it is his interest to be freed as soon as possible from an incurable malady. What, however, was certainly not only sad but actually

* Odyssey i. 446, Pope's version.

distressing was the news that Julius Avitus has died while returning from his Quæstorship—died on board ship, far from his loving brother, far from his mother and sisters! These are circumstances which do not matter to him now he is dead, but they did matter to him when dying, and they do matter to those who remain. This alone is distressing that a young man should have been cut off in the first bloom of such a character as his, a man who would have attained the highest eminence, if his virtues had had time to mature. How ardent was his love for literature! How much he read and even wrote! And all this has now perished, together with himself, without any fruit in the shape of posthumous fame.* But why indulge in grief, to which everything furnishes the richest material, if you once abandon the reins to it? I must make an end of my letter, so as to make an end at the same time of the tears which the letter has called forth.

* *Posteritas*, here "fame with posterity," as in Book II. i.

BOOK VI.

(1.)

To Tiro.

So long as I was on the other side of the Po, and you were in the district of Picenum, I missed you less; since I am in town, while you are still in Picenum, I miss you a great deal more; whether it is that the very spots where we are accustomed to be together bring you more keenly to my remembrance; or else that nothing sharpens one's longing after absent friends so much as vicinity to them, and so, the nearer you come to the hope of enjoying their society, the more impatient are you at being deprived of it. Whatever be the cause, deliver me from this misery. Come to me, or else I shall return to the place whence I rashly hurried, if only for this purpose, in order to learn by experience whether you, when you first find yourself in Rome without me, will write me such a letter as this.

(2.)

To Arrianus.

It happens to me not unfrequently, in our law courts, to miss M. Regulus: I would not say, to regret him. Why, then, to miss him? Because he held our profession in honour, and used to be solicitous, and wan with study, and to write out his speeches, though he never could learn them by heart. The very fact that he used to paint round, sometimes his right, sometimes his left eye,

the right one if he was going to speak for a plaintiff, and the left if for a defendant; that he used to transfer a white plaster from one eyebrow to another; that he always consulted the soothsayers on the result of his pleadings: all this originated, it is true, in excessive superstition, and yet at the same time in a great regard for the profession. This, to begin with, was particularly pleasant to those who were engaged in the same causes, that he always asked for unlimited time, and got together an audience by invitation; for what can be more pleasant than to speak as long as you like, while the annoyance is laid to another's charge, and to speak at your ease, yet with an appearance of being surprised by an audience which others have got together. But, however all this may be, Regulus did well to die, and he would have done better if he had died sooner. Now, certainly, he might have lived without injury to the public, under a Prince in whose reign he could have done no mischief. So it is allowable to miss him sometimes. For since his death a custom has extensively and increasingly prevailed of demanding, as well as allotting, two water-clocks per speaker, or even one, sometimes as little as half a one; since the bar want to have done with their speeches rather than to speak, and the bench to have finished their business rather than to judge. Such is the negligence, the apathy, and in short the irreverence, with which our profession and its perils are regarded. Pray, are we wiser than our ancestors? Are we more just than the laws themselves, which freely accord so many hours, so many days, so many adjournments? Were those ancestors of ours dullards and beyond measure slow, and do we speak more clearly, understand more rapidly, and decide more conscientiously, because we hurry through our causes with a smaller number of water-clocks than they used to take days to settle them in? O Regulus, you used to obtain from all the judges by your artifices that which extremely few of them accord to integrity! I at all events, whenever I sit

as judge (which is my place even more often than at the bar), allow as much water as any one asks for; inasmuch as I deem it an act of temerity to predict the length of a cause still unheard, and to place a limit of time on a matter whose proportions are unknown, particularly since the first thing which a judge owes to the faithful discharge of his duty is patience, which indeed is a large ingredient in justice. But a good deal that is superfluous is spoken! Be it so: yet it is better that even this should be spoken, than that what is essential should be unspoken. Besides you cannot possibly know whether it is superfluous or not, till you have heard what it is. However it will be better to talk of this, and of many other public abuses, when we meet. For you too, with your regard for the common interests, are in general desirous that matters which it would now be difficult to set straight may be at any rate amended.

Now, let us cast a glance at our households. Pray, is all well in yours? In mine, there is nothing new; and for me, the blessings I enjoy are rendered more grateful by their continuance, while incommodities are lightened by habit.

(3.)

To Verus.

I thank you for undertaking the cultivation of the farm given by me to my nurse. It was worth a hundred thousand sesterces* when I gave it her. Subsequently, the returns diminishing, its value fell with them; but now under your management it will recover itself. Only please to bear in mind that I am entrusting to you not trees and soil merely—though I do entrust these as well—but *my small present*. And that this should be as productive as possible is not of greater interest to her who received than to me who bestowed it.

* About £800.

(4.)

To Culpurnia, his Wife.

I never complained more than now of my occupations, which did not suffer me either to accompany you when you started for Campania for your health's sake, or to follow close after your departure. For at this time particularly I desired to be with you, in order to judge with my own eyes how far you are recruiting your strength and your dear little body, and, in short, whether you have passed through that delightful retreat and rich country without receiving any hurt. Indeed, if you were quite strong, my longing after you would not be unmingled with anxiety: for to be sometimes without news of an ardently beloved object is fraught with suspense and uneasiness. Now, however, the consideration of your delicate health, as well as your absence, torments me with vague disquietudes of various kinds. I apprehend everything, conjure up everything, and, as the nature of frightened people is, the things which of all others I deprecate are precisely those which I picture to myself. Wherefore, I the more urgently beseech you to have regard for my fears by writing me one, or even two letters a day. For I shall be more comfortable while reading them, and shall straightway fall to fear again, as soon as they are read.

(5.)

To Ursus.

I wrote you word that Varenus had obtained leave to compel the attendance of witnesses on his behalf;* which seemed to most to be fair, though some were obstinate in thinking it unjust, particularly Licinius Nepos, who, at the next meeting of the Senate, when other matters were before it, discussed the recent decree, thus reopening a

* To subpœna them, as we say. See Book V., Letter 20.

cause which had been disposed of. He went so far as to add that the Consuls should be asked to submit a motion (after the precedent of the Bribery Laws) on the subject of that against extortion. "Was it their pleasure that, for the future, an addition should be made to that law to the effect that, as the law in question gave power to accusers to collect materials and to enforce the attendance of witnesses, so a similar power should be given to the accused?" There were some who were displeased by this speech of his, as coming too late, out of season, and in the wrong place; inasmuch as the proper time for speaking against the decree had been neglected, and now fault was found with that which had been settled and which might have been opposed. Indeed Juventius Celsus, the Prætor, reproved him at length and with vigour for setting himself up as a corrector of the Senate. Nepos replied, and Celsus retorted; and neither of them refrained from insults. I don't choose to record words which I was vexed to hear *them* utter, so as to make me all the more indignant at some of our order, who were running backwards and forwards from Celsus to Nepos, according as one or the other was speaking, from curiosity to hear; and who by way of egging them on and inflaming them at one time, of reconciling and making it up between them at another, invoked "the approval of Cæsar," generally on behalf of each singly, but at times in favour of both, as at some spectacle for the public amusement! What to my mind was a most painful feature in all this, was that each had got information of what the other was preparing for him; for Celsus replied to Nepos from a written paper, and Nepos to Celsus from his note-book. Such was the loquacity of their friends that these men, on the point of wrangling, had a mutual knowledge of the event, just as though it had been arranged between them.

(6.)

To Fundanus.

Now, if ever, I could wish you were in Rome, and I beg that you will be. I have need of one to share my aspirations, my labours, my anxiety. Julius Naso is a candidate for office; he is standing with many competitors and good ones too, whom it will be glorious to beat and correspondingly difficult. So I am in a state of suspense, and am exercised by hope as well as troubled by fear, no longer feeling like one who has himself served the office of Consul; but once more imagining myself a candidate for each of the posts successively filled by me.

He merits this anxiety by his long affection for me. My friendship for him is not, to be sure, derived from any I had for his father—for in consequence of my age that could not be—however, when I was barely a stripling, his father used to be held out to me as a man of great reputation. He was deeply attached, not to learning only, but also to learned men, and was in the habit of coming almost daily to hear those whom I frequented at that time, Quintilian and Nicetes Sacerdos. He was in other respects a distinguished and authoritative personage, whose memory ought to be of service to his son. But now there are many in the Senate to whom he was unknown, and though there are many to whom he *was* known, yet these honour none but the living; so that my friend, putting aside the glory of his father—which, though a great illustration, is but a feeble recommendation to him—must all the more vigorously exert himself and go to work in person. And this to be sure he has always carefully done, as if foreseeing the present occasion. He has procured friends for himself, and those whom he has procured he has cultivated; *me,* certainly, as soon as he permitted himself to form a judgment, he selected as the object of his affection and imitation. He stands watchful

by me when speaking in public; he sits by me when I recite; he interests himself in my literary trifles from their very inception and from the moment of their birth; alone now, formerly in company with his brother, whose part (for he is lately dead) I ought to undertake, whose place I ought to fill. I grieve indeed that the one should have been so cruelly torn from us by a premature death, and the other deprived of his brother's assistance and left to the help of his friends alone.

For these reasons I implore you to come and join your suffrages to mine.* It is of great importance to me to be able to produce you and go about with you. The weight you carry is so great as to make me think I could canvass even my own friends more successfully in your company. Break short anything that detains you. My critical situation, my honour, my dignity even, demand this of you. I have taken in hand a candidate, and it is known that I have taken him in hand. The canvass is mine, the danger is mine. In short, if Naso gets what he asks, his will be the honour; if he fails, the defeat will be mine.

(7.)

To Calpurnia, his Wife.

You write that you are not a little affected by my absence, and that you have but one solace—in possessing my books instead of me, and even in often laying them beside you in bed, in my place. I am glad that you miss me, glad that you are soothed by such lenitives as these. In return, I keep reading your letters, and ever and anon take them into my hands as if they were just received, yet all the more am I inflamed with a longing for you. For when your letters are so agreeable, what must be the charm of your conversation! However, do

* *Suffragio meo tuum jungas*, join me as a *suffragator*, "as one of the backers—'nominators,' as we should say—of my friend."

you write as often as you can, though your doing so delights me in such a way as to torment me at the same time.

(8.)

To Priscus.

You both know and have a regard for Atilius Crescens. Indeed, what man of any mark either does not know him or has not a regard for him? He is one whom I cherish, not after the vulgar fashion, but with my whole heart. Our native towns are separated by one day's journey only. Our love for each other began—and this is the most fervent kind of love—when we were mere striplings. It endured to after years, and far from being cooled, was strengthened by our mature judgment. Those who are most intimately acquainted with either of us know this. For, not only does he widely proclaim and circulate his friendship for me, but I too make no secret of the interest I feel in his modest life, his repose, and his security. Moreover, when he apprehended the insolence of a certain individual who was about to enter on the Tribuneship of the Plebs, and had informed me of the fact, I replied, "Not during my lifetime!" *

Why do I tell you all this? That you may know that Atilius shall not suffer an injury while I am in existence. Again you will say, "Why all this?" Why, because Valerius Varus owed him a sum of money. Now the heir of this Varus is our friend Maximus, whom I myself have a great regard for, but you a still closer one. I pray you then, and indeed demand of you by right of our friendship, to see that my good Atilius has not only the principal but also several years' interest secured to him. He is a man most scrupulous as to encroaching on other people's pro-

* An allusion to Homer, Iliad i. 88, where Achilles says to Calchas, "No one, so long as I am alive and in the light of the world, shall lay a heavy hand on you by the hollow ships!"

perty, and careful of his own; he does not live by any business, and has no income but what results from his economy. For, the literary pursuits, in which he so greatly excels, he follows only for his own pleasure and glory. The smallest loss is a hard matter for him, it being so very hard to make good what is lost. Relieve him and relieve me from this difficulty: suffer me to enjoy to the full his amiable and sprightly character; for indeed I can't bear to see one sad whose cheerfulness will not allow me to be sad. In short, you know the quaint humour of the man, and I pray you take care that injustice does not turn it to bile and bitterness. What will be the strength of his resentment you may judge by that of his affection. His lofty and independent spirit will not brook a loss accompanied by an affront. And though he should brook it, I shall esteem the loss and the affront my own; only I shall be much more indignant than if it were my own. However, why employ denunciations and what may seem threats? Rather, as I began, so I beg and pray you to see to it that he does not think himself neglected by me (which I most strongly fear), or I think the same of you. And you *will* see to it, if the latter consideration weighs as much with you as the former does with me.

(9.)

To Tacitus.

You commend Julius Naso to my favour as a candidate. Naso to *me!* What if you commended my own self! However, I bear with it and forgive you. For I should have commended this very Naso to *you*, if you had been staying in Rome and I had been absent. There is this about anxiety that it will leave no stone unturned. However, I vote that *you* canvass other people; *I* will act as agent, assistant, and partner in your applications.

(10.)

To Albinus.

On my arrival at my mother-in-law's house near Alsium, which was once the property of Rufus Verginius,* the sight of the place itself painfully renewed my regrets for that admirable and illustrious man. For this was the retreat where he commonly resided, calling it indeed "the dear little nest of his old age." Turn where I would, my soul, my eyes, looked for *him*. I was desirous of seeing his monument as well, and repented having seen it. For it is still unfinished; nor is this owing to any difficulty in the undertaking (which is of moderate, or rather small, dimensions), but to the apathy of the person on whom the duty was enjoined. A sense of indignation mingled with pity steals over me to think that ten years after his death there should be lying without an epitaph, without a name over them, the ashes of one the glory of whose memory pervades the world. Yet he had enjoined and provided that that divine and immortal exploit of his should be inscribed in verse.

> "Here Rufus lies, who Vindex overcame,
> Not for his own, but for his country's fame."

So rare is fidelity in friendship, so easy is it to forget the dead, that we ought to raise for ourselves even our own sepulchres and to anticipate all the duties of our heirs. For who has not cause to fear what we see to have happened in the case of Verginius? Only in his case his celebrity makes the wrong done him, as it is the more undeserved, so also the more widely known.

(11.)

To Maximus.

O joyful day! Summoned to assist the Præfect of the

* See Book II., Letter 1.

city, I have heard two young men of the greatest promise and the highest qualities pleading against each other, Fuscus Salinator and Ummidius Quadratus, an admirable pair, destined to be ornaments not only of our age, but of learning itself. Both of them exhibited remarkable modesty, yet with resolution unimpaired. Their deportment was noble, their language pure Latin, their voices manly, their memories tenacious, and their great natural faculties were equalled by their judgment. Each of these things singly was a pleasure, and, together with them this, that the young men directed their glances at me as their guide and teacher, and seemed to those who heard them to be imitating me and treading in my footsteps. O day (for I must repeat it) most joyful, and to be marked by me with the whitest of stones! What, indeed, can be more joyful, in a public point of view, than that young men of the highest rank should be seeking a name and fame from intellectual pursuits; or more desirable for me personally than that I should be set up as a kind of model to such as have noble aims? I pray the gods to make me the constant recipient of such delight as this; and I beg of these same gods (taking you to witness) that all those who shall think it worth their while to imitate me may desire to be better than me.

(12.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

You, assuredly, ought not to hold your hand in recommending to me those persons whom you think worthy of support. For, not only is it becoming in you to render services to many, but it becomes me also to undertake whatever pertains to your wishes. Consequently I will do all in my power for Vettius Priscus, particularly in my own arena—that is, in the Centumviral Court. You bid me forget those letters which you wrote me, as you term it, with your heart laid open. But there are no letters

which I more desire to bear in mind. For by these I am particularly made sensible of the strength of your affection for me, since you dealt with me as you were used to deal with your own son. Nor can I conceal from you that they were rendered all the more agreeable to me by the fact that I had a good case, since I *had* attended with the greatest diligence to what you wished attended to. Accordingly I entreat you, again and again, always to convey your reproaches to me in the same straightforward way as often as I shall seem to fall short (I say "seem," for I never shall really fall short), since *I* shall understand that they proceed from the strength of your affection, and *you* will rejoice to find that I do not deserve them.

(13.)

To Ursus.

Have you ever seen any one so troubled and exercised as my friend Varenus? He has had to defend, and as it were make fresh application for, that which he had obtained only after a great struggle.* The Bithynians were impudent enough to criticise the decree of the Senate, and even to try and invalidate it, before the Consuls, and actually to incriminate it to the Emperor, who was absent from Rome. On being referred back to the Senate by him, they did not desist from their efforts. Claudius Capito spoke for them, disrespectfully rather than firmly, since he impeached a decree of the Senate in presence of the Senate. Catius Fronto replied with dignity and resolution. The Senate itself was admirable. For even those who had previously been for refusing the application of Varenus were of opinion that, having once been allowed, it should still be allowed, on the ground that though it was permissible for individuals to differ when a matter was undecided, yet when it was fairly settled the decision of the majority should be unanimously upheld.

* See Letter 5 of this Book, and Book V., Letter 20.

Only Acilius Rufus and, with him, some seven or eight—seven rather—persisted in their former opinion. In this small number there were some whose temporary fit of severity, or rather affectation of severity, furnished much amusement. You will, however, be able to judge what a struggle awaits us in the fight itself, when the preludes to it and the preliminary skirmishes, so to speak, have aroused such contests.

(14.)

To Mauricus.

You invite me to your place near Formiæ. I will accept on one condition, that you do not put yourself out in any way; an arrangement by which I bargain for myself as well. For it is not the sea and the seaside that I am going after, but my own ease, and liberty, and *you;* otherwise it would be preferable to remain in town. It is best that one's actions should be entirely dependent on the will of others, or else on one's own: the nature of *my* taste is certainly such that it will have nothing but what is complete in itself and free from admixture.*

(15.)

To Romanus.

You were not present at a very curious occurrence, nor was I either; but the story reached me soon after the event. Passennus Paulus, a distinguished Roman knight, and among the first for learning, writes elegiac verse. This runs in his family; he is a townsman of Propertius, and even numbers Propertius among his ancestors. As this Paulus was reciting, he commenced with these words—

"Priscus, thou bids't me."

Upon which Javolenus Priscus (who was present in his

* He means—I would rather remain in Rome, entirely devoted to business, than go into the country, unless I can do there entirely what I like. One thing or the other: constant occupation or perfect freedom. I can't stand a mixture.

character of a particular friend of Paulus) cried out, "*I* don't bid you, however." You may imagine how the people laughed and jested. To be sure, Priscus is of doubtful sanity, yet he takes part in ceremonial occasions, sits as assessor to the magistrates, and even gives legal opinions publicly, which makes this action of his all the more ridiculous and remarkable. Meanwhile Paulus, through another's folly, found his audience somewhat chilled. Such particular care should people take beforehand, when they are going to recite, not only to be sane themselves, but also to invite none but sane hearers.

(16.)

To Tacitus.

You ask me to write you an account of my uncle's end, in order that you may be able the more faithfully to transmit it to posterity. I thank you, as I see that his death, if commemorated by you, has an imperishable renown offered it. For though he fell amid the destruction of such fair regions, and seems destined to live for ever—like so many peoples and cities—through the memorable character of the disaster; though he himself was the author of many and enduring works; yet the immortality of your writings will add greatly to the uninterrupted continuance of his fame. For my part I deem those blessed to whom, by favour of the gods, it has been granted either to do what is worth writing of, or to write what is worth reading; above measure blessed those on whom both gifts have been conferred. In the latter number will be my uncle, by virtue of his own and of your compositions. Hence, I the more readily undertake, and even lay claim to peform what you request.

He was at Misenum, in personal command of the fleet. The ninth day before the Kalends of September, at about the seventh hour, my mother indicated to him the appearance of a cloud of unusual size and shape. He had sunned

himself, and next gone into his cold bath; and after a light meal, which he took reposing, was engaged in study. He called for his sandals, and ascended to a spot from which this portent could best be seen. A cloud was rising—from what mountain was a matter of uncertainty to those who looked at it from a distance: afterwards it was known to be Vesuvius—whose appearance and form would be represented by a pine better than any other tree. For, after towering upwards to a great height with an extremely lofty stem, so to speak, it spread out into a number of branches; because, as I imagine, having been lifted up by a recent breeze, and having lost the support of this as it grew feebler, or merely in consequence of yielding to its own weight, it was passing away laterally. It was at one time white, at another dingy and spotted, according as it carried earth or ashes. To a man of my uncle's attainments, it seemed a remarkable phenomenon, and one to be observed from a nearer point of view. He ordered his fast-sailing cutter to be got ready, and, in case I wished to accompany him, gave me leave to do so. I replied that I preferred to go on with my studies, and it so happened that he had himself given me something to write out.

He was in the act of leaving the house, when a note was handed him from Rectina.* Cæsius Bassus, frightened, together with the people there, at the imminence of the peril (for his villa lay under the mountain, and there was no escape for him except by taking ship), begged my uncle to rescue him from so critical a situation. Upon this he changed his plan, and, having started on his enterprise as a student, proceeded to carry it out in the spirit of a hero. He launched his four-ranked galleys, and embarked in person, in order to carry assistance, not to Rectina only, but to many others, for the charms of the coast caused it to be much peopled. He hastened in the direction whence

* Apparently a place between Portici and Herculaneum. There are various readings here. Keil prints *accipit codicillos Rectinæ + Tasci inminenti periculo exterritae.* If this be correct, Rectina will be the name of a woman, the wife of Tascus.

every one else was flying, holding a direct course, and keeping his helm set straight for the peril, so free from fear that he dictated and caused to be noted down, as fast as he seized them with his eyes, all the shiftings and shapes of the dreadful prodigy. Ashes were already falling on the ships, hotter and thicker the nearer they approached; and even pumice and other stones, black, and scorched, and cracked by the fire. There had been a sudden retreat of the sea, and the debris from the mountain made the shore unapproachable. Having hesitated for a moment whether to turn back, he shortly called out to the helmsman (who was urging him to do so), "Fortune favours the brave! Make in the direction of Pomponianus." The latter was at Stabiæ, separated from him by the whole width of the bay, for the sea flows in by shores gradually winding and curving inwards. There, in view of the danger which, though it had not yet approached, was nevertheless manifest, and must be upon them as soon as it extended itself, he had got his effects together on board ship, resolved to fly,* if only the wind left off blowing from the opposite quarter. My uncle, brought to shore by this same wind, which precisely favoured him, embraced his trembling friend, consoling and exhorting him, and, in order to calm his fears by his own *sang froid*, bade them conduct him to the bath. After bathing, he took his place at table, and dined gaily, or (which was equally heroic) with an air of gaiety.

Meanwhile, from many points of Mount Vesuvius, vast sheets of flame and tall columns of fire were blazing, the flashes and brightness of which were heightened by the darkness of night. My uncle, to soothe the terrors of those about him, kept telling them that these were fires which the frightened country people had left to burn, and that the deserted houses were blazing away all by them-

* *Certus fugae. Certus* is very common in this sense; but the meaning here might very well be "sure of escape." In ix. 3, *certus posteritatis* undoubtedly means "sure of posthumous fame."

selves. Then he gave himself up to repose, and slept a perfectly genuine sleep, for his snoring (which in consequence of his full habit was heavy and loud) was heard by those in attendance about his door.

However, the courtyard from which this suite of rooms was approached was already so full of ashes mixed with pumice-stones that its surface was rising, and a longer stay in the bedchamber would have cut off all egress. On being aroused, he came forth and rejoined Pomponianus and the others who had kept watching. They consulted together whether to remain under cover or wander about in the open; for the walls nodded under the repeated and tremendous shocks, and seemed, as though dislodged from their foundations, to be swaying to and fro, first in one direction and then in another. On the other hand, in the open air, there was the fall of the pumice-stones (though they were light and burnt out) to be apprehended. However, a comparison of dangers led to the choice of the latter course. With my uncle indeed it was a case of one reason getting the better of another; while in the case of others fear overcame fear. They covered their heads with pillows tied round with cloths: this was their way of protecting themselves against the shower. By this time it was day elsewhere, but there it was night, the blackest and thickest of all nights, which, however, numerous torches and lights of various kinds served to alleviate. It was decided to make for the shore, in order to learn from the nearest point whether the sea was by this time at all available. A huge and angry sea still continued running. Here, reclining on a cloth which had been thrown on the ground, my uncle more than once called for a draught of cold water and swallowed it. Upon this, an outbreak of flame and smell of sulphur, premonitory of further flames, put some to flight and roused him. With the help of two slave-boys he rose from the ground, *accepit* immediately fell back, owing (as I gather) to the

dense vapour obstructing his breath and stopping up the access to his gullet, which with him was weak and narrow and frequently subject to wind. When day returned (the third from that which he had looked upon for the last time *) his body was found whole and uninjured, in the dress he wore; its appearance was that of one asleep rather than dead.

Meanwhile my mother and I at Misenum—however, this has nothing to do with history, nor did you wish to learn anything except what related to his death. So I will make an end. This alone I will add, that everything related by me has been either matter of personal observation or else what I heard on the spot, the time of all others when the truth is told. Do you select what you choose. For a letter is a different matter from a history; it is one thing to write to a friend and another to write for the world.

(17.)

To Restitutus.

I can't refrain from letting off by letter to you—since it is not my good luck to be able to do it in your presence—the touch of indignation experienced by me at a recitation held by a certain friend of mine. A production of a most finished kind was being read; and this, two or three of the company (learned persons, as they seemed to themselves and a few others) listened to, with the appearance of deaf and dumb people. They never parted their lips, they never moved a hand, they never rose from their seats, if it had been only from the fatigue of remaining seated. Whence all this solemnity and wisdom? Nay rather what dulness, arrogance, perversity, or more properly madness, to employ a whole day with the

* His body was found next morning: but counting the day of his death as no day at all, owing to the darkness, Pliny is able to express himself, as in the text, in the Roman idiom.

special object of offending and leaving as an enemy the man to whose house you have come as to a special friend! Are you a more learned man than he? So much the less room for envy, for he who is envious shows his inferiority. In short, whether you are worth more than him, or less than him, or the same as he is, praise him in his capacity of inferior, or superior, or equal; if your superior, because, unless he is worthy of praise, you yourself cannot be; if your inferior or equal, because it concerns your own reputation that the man whom you excel, or even are on a par with, should appear as great as possible. For my part I actually revere and admire all those who accomplish anything in literature. For it is a difficult, arduous, and fastidious pursuit, one which in its turn spurns those who spurn it: unless by chance you entertain a different opinion. And yet what individual has a greater respect for the pursuit than you, or where can there be a kindlier critic? And this is the consideration which has led me to inform you in particular of my indignation, as being the person most sure to share my feelings.

(18.)

To Sabinus.

You ask me to appear for the Firmani, in their State trial; and, though busied with numerous occupations, I will do my best for them. I desire indeed to lay under an obligation not only a most distinguished colony, by undertaking the office of their advocate, but also you yourself by a service which is so agreeable to you. For since, as you are in the habit of proclaiming, the friendship which exists between us is looked upon by you in the light of an advantage and a glory, there is nothing which I ought to deny you, particularly when you ask on behalf of your birth-place. What indeed can be more honourable than prayers prompted by duty, or more efficacious than

accipiu

those which spring from affection? Accordingly, plight my troth to your, or rather now to *our*, friends, the Firmani. Not only does their own distinction give promise that they are worthy of my efforts and zeal, but also especially this consideration, that those are likely to be men of great worth among whom such a one as you has arisen.

(19.)

To Nepos.

Are you aware that the price of land has risen, and particularly of land near Rome? The cause of this sudden dearness is a matter which has been the subject of much discussion. At the last Comitia the Senate gave expression to an opinion which did it great honour: "that candidates should not give banquets, nor send presents, nor lodge money for the purpose of bribery," of which practices the two former were carried on as openly as they were unstintedly, and the third, though done privately, was perfectly ascertained. Upon which my friend Homullus carefully availing himself of this consensus of the Senate when called on to vote, proposed a resolution that the Consuls should make known the universal wish to the Emperor, and should beg him, as he had done in the case of other abuses, to employ his sagacity in counteracting this one. He *is* counteracting it: by a bribery law he has restrained the former shameful and discreditable expenditure on the part of candidates: and he has ordered them to invest a third part of their fortunes in real estate, deeming it disgraceful, as indeed it was, that those who sought honours should look upon Rome and Italy, not as their country, but as a kind of inn or hostelry, like so many people on their travels. There is consequently a rush of candidates; they are bidding against each other for the purchase of whatever they hear is for sale, and in this way are the means of bringing fresh properties into the market. Accordingly, if you are tired of your farms

in Italy, this is the time for selling, as also, by Hercules, for buying in the provinces,* since these same candidates are selling there in order to buy here.

(20.)

To Tacitus.

You say that the letter I wrote you, at your request, on the subject of my uncle's death has made you wish to know what I myself, when left behind at Misenum—for with the mention of this I broke off—had to go through, not merely in the way of alarms, but of actual adventures.

"Though memory shuns the theme, I will begin."†

After the departure of my uncle, I devoted what time was left to study (it was for that purpose that I remained behind); the bath shortly followed, then dinner, then a short and troubled sleep. There had been heavings of the earth for many days before this, but they produced the less apprehension from being customary in Campania. On that night, however, they so much increased that everything seemed not so much to be in motion as to be turned upside down. My mother rushed into my room; I was similarly getting up with the intention of arousing her in case she were asleep. We sat down in a courtyard attached to the house, which separated by a small space the dwelling from the sea. I do not know whether to style it intrepidity or imprudence on my part, seeing that I was only in my eighteenth year; however, I called for a volume of Livy, and read it as though quite at my ease, and even made extracts from it, as I had begun to do. Upon this, a friend of my uncle's, who had lately come to him from Spain, when he saw my mother and me seated, and me reading into the bargain, reproved her for her apathy and me for my insensibility to danger. None the less

* *In provinciis*, in the Roman sense as distinguished from Italy.

† The original is a quotation from Æneid ii. 12.

diligently did I devote myself to my book. It was now seven o'clock in the morning, yet still there was but a kind of sickly and doubtful light; now, too, that the surrounding buildings had been shaken, as the place in which we were, though not under cover, was of small dimensions, there was a great and unavoidable risk of our being overwhelmed. Then, at last, we decided on leaving the town. The mass of the inhabitants followed us terror-stricken, and (an effect of panic causing it to resemble prudence) preferring the guidance of others to their own, they pressed on us as we were making off, and impelled us forwards with their crowded ranks. When we had got beyond the buildings we stopped. There we experienced much that was strange, and many terrors. For the vehicles which we had ordered to be brought out, though standing on a perfectly level plain, were rocking from one side to the other, and would not remain still in the same place even when propped under with stones. Moreover, we saw the sea sucked back into itself, and repulsed as it were by the quaking of the earth. The shore had certainly encroached on the sea, and retained a number of marine animals on its dry sands. On the other side of us a black and terrible cloud, broken by the zig-zag and tremulous careerings of the fiery element, was parting asunder in long trains of flame: these were like lightning, but on a larger scale. Then, indeed, the above-mentioned friend from Spain became more urgent and pressing. "If," said he, "*your* brother and *your* uncle is alive, it is his wish that you should be in safety; if he has perished, it *was* his wish that you should survive him. Why then hesitate to escape?" We replied that we could not so act as, while uncertain of his safety, to provide for our own. Without further delay he rushed off, and got out of reach of danger as fast as he could.

Not long after, the cloud in question descended on the earth and covered the sea. Already it had enveloped and hidden from view Capreæ, and blotted out the promontory

of Misenum. Upon this my mother begged and prayed and even ordered me to make my escape as best I could, it being in my power as a young man to do so; as for herself, retarded by her years and her frame, she was well content to die provided she had not been the cause of my death. I, on the other hand, declared that I would not be saved except in her company, and clasping her hand I compelled her to quicken her pace. She obeyed with reluctance, blaming herself for delaying me. And now came a shower of ashes, though as yet but a thin one. I looked back: a dense mist was closing in behind us, and following us like a torrent as it streamed along the ground. "Let us turn aside," said I, "while we can still see, lest we be thrown down in the road and trampled upon in the darkness by the crowd which accompanies us." We had scarcely sat down when night came on, not such as it is when there is no moon, or when there are clouds, but the night of a closed place with the lights put out. One could hear the shrieks of the women, the cries for help of the children, the shouts of the men: some were calling for their parents, others for their young ones, others for their partners and recognising them by their voices. Some were lamenting their own case, others that of those dear to them. There were those who, through fear of death, invoked death. Many raised their hands to the gods, but the greater number concluded that there were no longer gods anywhere, and that the last eternal night of story had settled on the world. Nor were there wanting those who by imaginary and false alarms increased the real dangers. Some present announced that such and such a part of Misenum had been overthrown, or such another was in flames; falsely, yet to believing ears. There was a little light again, but this seemed to us not so much day-light as a sign of approaching fire. Accordingly there was fire, but it stayed at a considerable distance from us, then darkness again and a thick and heavy shower of ashes. We got up from time to time and shook

these off us; otherwise we should have been covered with them and even crushed by their weight. I might make a boast of not having suffered to escape me either a groan or a word lacking in fortitude, in the midst of such perils, were it not for the fact that I believed myself to be perishing in company with all things, and all things with me, a miserable and yet a mighty consolation in death.

At last, this black mist grew thin, and went off into a kind of smoke or haze; soon came real day, and the sun even shone forth, luridly however, and with the appearance it usually wears under an eclipse. Our yet trembling eyes saw everything changed and covered with deep ashes as with snow. We returned to Misenum, and refreshed our persons as best we might, and there spent a night of suspense alternating between hope and fear. Fear prevailed, for the quaking of the earth continued, and many persons, crazy with terror, were sporting with their own and other's misfortunes by means of the most appalling predictions. Yet not even then, after experiencing and still expecting perils, did we think of going away till news came of my uncle. All this, which is in no way worthy of history, will be for you to read, not to write about, and you must lay it to your own account (since it was you who called for the communication) if it should seem to you not even worthy of a letter.

(21.)

To Caninius.

I am one of those who admire the ancients, yet I do not, like some, disparage the intellects of our own time. For it is not true that nature, as though wearied and effete, no longer produces anything worthy of admiration. And indeed I lately heard Vergilius Rufus reading to a small company a comedy written after the model of the

old comedy, and so well written that it may itself serve as a model some day. I do not know whether you are acquainted with the author, though you ought to be; for he is a man of mark owing to his high character, his refined genius, and his versatility as a writer. He has written "Mimiambi"* with much delicacy, melody and grace, indeed masterpieces of their kind (for there is no kind of composition which, if carried to perfection, may not be styled a masterpiece); he has written comedies in imitation of Menander and other authors of the same age. You might rank them among the works of Plautus and Terence. Now, for the first time, though not with the air of a beginner, he exhibits himself in the old comedy. Vigour, grandeur, subtlety, pungency, sweetness, humour, none of these are wanting to him; he exalts virtue and lashes vice, employing fictitious names with good taste, and real ones with appropriateness. In my case only he has transgressed the bounds, through excess of complaisance, except for this indeed that poets are licensed to fib. To sum up, I shall squeeze the book out of him and send it to you to read, or rather to be learnt by heart, for I am sure you will not lay it down, if you once take it up.

(22.)

To Tiro.

An affair has taken place, which is of importance to all those who are destined to govern provinces, and of importance too to those who trust implicitly in their friends. Lustricius Bruttianus, having discovered Montanius Atticinus, one of his suite, in many delinquencies, reported him to Cæsar. Atticinus added to his former delinquencies by accusing the man whom he had deceived. An investigation was allowed, and I was among the assessors. Each party pleaded his own case; in a summary way,

* Mimic poems, in iambics.

however, and touching only on the heads, a method by which the truth is at once brought to light. Bruttianus produced his will, which he declared to have been written by the hand of Atticinus; this showed the closeness of their intercourse and the necessity which had driven him to complain of one whom he had loved so dearly. He enumerated certain disgraceful and palpable offences; which charges Atticinus, being unable to impair, retorted in such a way as to prove himself a mean knave by his defence and a scoundrel by his accusations. For by bribing one of the secretaries' slaves, he had intercepted the Governor's official minutes and mutilated them, and now with consummate rascality was trying to turn his own crime to account against his friend. Cæsar acted nobly. He called for our verdicts, not on Bruttianus but forthwith on Atticinus. The latter was convicted and banished to an island. Bruttianus received a perfectly merited acknowledgment of his integrity, and, in addition to this, obtained the credit due to his energy; for, after making short work of his own defence, he conducted his accusation with vigour, and showed that he was as spirited as he was good and honest.

This I have written to you by way of warning you beforehand, now that you have had a province allotted to you, to trust to yourself for the most part, and not put entire confidence in any one else. Next, you will learn, that should any one chance to deceive you (which may the gods avert!) satisfaction is provided you. Yet, again and again be careful that there may be no need of this; for it is not so agreeable to be vindicated as it is miserable to be imposed upon.

(23.)

To Triarius.

You beg me urgently to undertake a case in which you are interested, and which, independently of this, is an

important one, exciting public attention. I will do so, but not gratuitously. "Can it be," say you, "that *you* won't act gratuitously?" Yes, it can be; for I shall exact a fee more creditable to me than if I held a brief for you gratis. I ask, and indeed stipulate, that Cremutius Ruso shall be with me in the case. This is a practice of mine, and one which I have frequently followed before now in the case of several young men of distinction. For I am excessively anxious to exhibit young men of promise to the Courts, and to introduce them to fame. This service I ought to render to Ruso, if to any one, whether on account of the nobility of his own birth, or else of the extraordinary regard he has for me; and I think it of great consequence that he should be seen and heard in the same cases, and moreover on the same side, as myself. Oblige me then, oblige me, before he speaks; for when he has once spoken, you will express your obligations. I guarantee that he will satisfy your anxieties and my hopes and the importance of the case. He has excellent qualities and will soon be bringing out other people, if meanwhile he be brought out by us. For indeed no man is gifted with a genius so immediately conspicuous as to be able to rise from obscurity, unless the materials, the opportunity—ay, and a patron too and one to recommend him—fall to his lot.

(24.)

To Macer.

What a mighty difference it makes, *by* whom a thing is done! For deeds of the same character are either exalted to the highest pitch or sunk in the depths of oblivion according to the fame or the obscurity of the actors. I was sailing on our lake Larius,* when an elderly friend pointed out to me a villa and moreover a saloon projecting over the lake. "From that spot," said he, "a townswoman

* Now the Lago di Como.

of ours, once upon a time, precipitated herself in company with her husband." I inquired the reason. The husband had for a long time been an invalid, suffering from putrid ulcers in the groin.* His wife insisted on seeing them; no one (she said) could inform him more faithfully than she whether he was capable of being cured. She saw them and despaired. Next she advised him to die, and became herself his companion in death, nay rather his example and leader, the compelling cause of his death; for she tied her husband to her, and jumped into the lake. This exploit was never heard of till recently, even by me her townsman; not because it was smaller than Arria's celebrated exploit,† but because the agent was a smaller person.

(25.)

To Hispanus.

You write word that Robustus, a distinguished Roman knight, got as far as Ocriculum—to which point their road lay in common—with Atilius Scaurus, a friend of mine, and that nothing further was heard of him. You wish for Scaurus to come and, if it be in his power, to put us on some track for inquiry. He shall come; I fear to no purpose. Indeed I suspect that something or other has befallen Robustus, similar to what once befell Metilius Crispus, a townsman of mine. I had obtained for him his Company, and had further presented him at his departure with forty thousand sesterces‡ for his outfit and equipment; I never, after this, got any letters from him or any news with regard to his end. Whether he was cut off by his slaves, or in company with his slaves, is a matter of doubt; certainly neither he nor any of his slaves subsequently appeared, as indeed none of Robustus's have. We must use our efforts, however; we must send for Scaurus;

* *Circa velanda corporis*, in the original.

† See Book III., Letter 16.

‡ About £320.

we must accord this to your prayers and to those, so highly to be commended, of that excellent youth who is making inquiry for his father with such marvellous affection and marvellous sagacity as well. May the gods be favourable, so that he may discover the object of his search, in the same way as he already discovered the person in whose company he had been.

(26.)

To Servianus.

I am delighted, and congratulate you, that you have betrothed your daughter to Fuscus Salinator. His family is patrician, his father a man of the highest character, and his mother of like repute. He himself is of a studious and literary turn, indeed learned, a boy in candour, a young man in geniality, an elder in seriousness. Nor does my love for him deceive me. I do love him, to be sure, with effusion (his attentions and his respect for me have deserved this), yet I exercise my judgment, and indeed the more stringently the more I love him; and I guarantee to you, as one who have closely investigated him, that you will have a son-in-law than whom your wishes could not have formed a better. All that remains is that he should, as soon as possible, make you the grandfather of young ones like himself. How happy the time, when it will be my good fortune to receive from your arms his children and your grandchildren—just as if they were my own children or grandchildren—and to hold them in mine, as though I had an equal right to them!

(27.)

To Severus.

You ask me to consider what you as Consul Elect should say, when called upon in the Senate, in honour of the

Emperor.* It is easy to find what to say, but by no means easy to make a selection; so abundant is the material furnished by his virtues. However, I will write or—which I should prefer—will intimate to you my ideas by word of mouth, on condition of first exhibiting to you the causes of my hesitation. I am in doubt whether to advise you to do the same as I did. When Consul Elect, I abstained from all those usual topics which, though not flattery, would have borne the appearance of flattery; not by way of showing my independence and fearlessness, but as understanding our Sovereign, whose greatest commendation I saw to be this, that nothing should be proposed by me in his honour, as though on compulsion. I remembered too that the most numerous honours had been conferred on the worst princes; from whom our present excellent Sovereign could not be distinguished in any better way than by a different mode of speaking of him. This particular point I did not disguise or pass in silence; lest my treatment should haply seem due to forgetfulness instead of being the result of judgment. Such was my conduct on that occasion; but the same course does not find favour with, is not indeed suitable to, all persons. Moreover, the grounds for doing or not doing anything are altered according to the circumstances of the parties themselves, and the matters in hand, and the occasion. For the recent achievements of our illustrious Prince furnish an opportunity of saying in the Senate much that is new and important as well as true. For which reasons, as I before said, I doubt whether to advise you to act now as I did then. This, however, I have no doubt about, that it was my duty to offer for your consideration the course pursued by myself.

* *Quid in honorem principis censeas.* The Cousul Elect when called on for the first time for his vote was expected to make some complimentary remarks on the Sovereign.

(28.)

To Pontius.

I know the cause which prevented your arriving in Campania before me. But, albeit absent, you seem to have migrated here with all your possessions, such a plenty of town and country produce has been offered me in your name, all of which, though with great coolness, I have nevertheless accepted. For not only did your servants beg me to do so, but I feared you would be angry with me and with them if I had not done so. For the future, if you don't put a limit to this, I shall. And already I have announced to your servants that, on their bringing so many things another time, they would have to take them all back again. You will say it behoves me to use what is yours as though it were my own. Certainly; but I am for being just as careful of it as though it were my own.

(29.)

To Quadratus.

Avidius Quietus, who regarded me with particular affection and (I am no less glad to say) approval, used to relate many things of Thrasea, whose friend he had been, and among them frequently this. He was in the habit of laying it down that the causes to be undertaken were these: those of friends, those which could find no advocate, and those which pertained to example. The case of friends needs no explanation. Why such as could find no advocate? Because in these the fearlessness as well as the kindliness of him who pleads them would be most strongly shown. Why those pertaining to example? Because it would make a great difference whether a good or a bad one were exhibited. To these categories of causes, though perhaps rather presumptuously, I must yet add such as are distinguished and conspicuous. For it is fair

at times to plead the cause of glory and fame—in other words, one's own cause.

These are the limits which, since you have consulted me, I would impose on your sense of dignity and self-respect. Nor do I forget that practice is both held to be and is the best teacher of the art of speaking; indeed, I see many who, with small parts and no literature, have by dint of pleading attained to pleading well. Yet I also find that saying to be most true which has come to me as Pollio's, or under the name of Pollio: "Pleading well has been the cause of my pleading often, and pleading often the cause of my pleading less well;" because, in fact, by too constant practice facility rather than a real faculty is acquired, and rashness rather than self-reliance. Nor, indeed, was Isocrates prevented from being held a consummate orator by the fact that the weakness of his voice and his shyness impeded him from speaking in public. Accordingly read, write, and meditate a great deal, that you may be able to speak when you choose: you *will* speak when you ought so to choose. This is the mean which I myself have commonly preserved. Not unfrequently I have yielded to necessity, which ranks as a reason. For I have pleaded certain causes by order of the Senate, in the number of which, however, were some which come under the above classification of Thrasea, that is to say, were such as to pertain to example. I appeared for the Bætici against Bæbius Massa. The question was whether an investigation should be granted. It *was* granted. I appeared again on behalf of the same parties when they made plaint against Cæcilius Classicus. The question was as to the propriety of punishing provincials as the associates and subordinate agents of a governor. They suffered punishment. I prosecuted Marius Priscus, who was condemned in virtue of the law on extortion, and who profited by the clemency of that law, for by the enormity of his crimes he had outstripped its heaviest penalties. He was banished. I defended Julius Bassus,

who, though too unguarded and incautious, was by no means criminal. Judges were assigned him, and he kept his place in the Senate. I spoke lately on behalf of Varenus, who demanded the right, equally with the other side, to compel the attendance of witnesses. He obtained it. For the future I pray that I may be ordered to plead those causes in particular which it would become me to undertake even of my own free will.

(30.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

We are bound, by Hercules, to celebrate your birthdays in the same manner as our own, since the joy of ours depends on yours, and through your diligence and care we are happy here, and at our ease when with you.* The Camillian† villa, which you possess in Campania, has certainly suffered from age: everything of value about it, however, either remains intact, or is very slightly injured. I will see then to restorations being made on the most reasonable terms. I seem to have many friends, but of that particular class whom you are in search of and the business demands, scarcely one; for they are all men of the town, engaged in town pursuits: whereas for the management of country properties a rough-and-ready rustic sort of person is required, to whom this particular employment will not seem burdensome, nor the occupation one of petty interests, nor the solitude melancholy. You have a very favourable opinion of Rufus, as having been your son's friend. What, however, he may be able to do for us there, I am not in a position to say. That he has the best intentions, I believe.

* It is impossible to know what this means in the absence of Fabatus's letter, to which this is evidently an answer.

† This probably means, "once the property of Camillus."

(31.)

To Cornelianus.

Summoned by our emperor to act as his assessor at Centum Cellæ* (that was the name of the place), I experienced the greatest pleasure. What indeed can be more delightful than to enjoy a near view of the prince's equity, wisdom, and affability, and that too in his retirement, where these qualities best disclose themselves? The subjects of investigation were of various kinds, and such as to test the merits of the judge by the diversity of their character.

Claudius Ariston pleaded his cause, a leading citizen of Ephesus, a munificent man, seeking popularity by innocent means; hence arose envy, and an informer was suborned against him by persons whose character was the opposite of his own. Accordingly he was acquitted, and received satisfaction.

Next day the case of Gallita was heard, who was charged with adultery. This lady, the wife of a military tribune and candidate for office, had stained her own and her husband's reputation by an amour with a centurion. The husband had written to the consular legate, and he to Cæsar. Cæsar, after sifting the evidence, cashiered the centurion, and banished him into the bargain. There still remained a balance of punishment due to an offence which can only be committed by two persons. But the husband was kept back (not without incurring some censure for his forbearance) by his love for his wife, whom he had indeed kept in his house, even after information had been laid of the adultery, as though satisfied with having removed his rival. Admonished that he must go through with his charge, he did so very unwillingly. However, her condemnation was unavoidable, unwilling as the prosecutor might be. She was convicted, and left to the penalties of

*Now Civita Vecchia.

the Lex Julia. Cæsar added to his judgment both the name of the centurion and a reference to military practice, that he might not seem to reserve for his own cognisance *all* cases of this kind.

On the third day an investigation was entered upon, which had been the subject of a great deal of talk and a variety of reports. It related to some codicils of Julius Tiro, part of which were admitted to be genuine, while part were said to be forged. The persons indicted were Sempronius Senecio, a Roman knight, and Eurythmus, Cæsar's freedman and procurator. The heirs, while Cæsar was in Dacia, had requested him in a joint letter to undertake the investigation. He had consented, and on his return had appointed a day; and when some of the heirs, as if out of regard for Eurythmus, were for abandoning the prosecution, he had said most nobly, "Neither is he Polyclitus, nor am I Nero."* However, he indulged them, at their request, with a delay, the period of which having expired, he now took his seat to hear the case. On the part of the heirs, two in all put in an appearance: they prayed either that the whole of the heirs should be compelled to act, since all had united in lodging the information, or that it might be permitted to them, as well as to the others, to withdraw from the suit. Cæsar expressed himself with great wisdom and at the same time with great moderation; and when the advocate of Senecio and Eurythmus said that the accused would be left exposed to suspicion unless they were heard, "I care not," said he, 'whether *they* are left exposed to suspicions: but *I* am." Then, turning to us, "You understand how we ought to act; these people want to make it a ground of complaint that they have been allowed to withdraw from the prosecution."† Then, pursuant to the decision of the Council,

* Polyclitus was a freedman of Nero. The sense is, "I do not favour my freedmen, and wink at their oppressions and extortions, as Nero did."

† "If we allow them to retire from the case they will declare that this was done to shield Eurythmus." I read *isti enim queri volunt, quod sibi licuerit non accusare.*

he ordered it to be announced to all the heirs that they must either proceed, or else individually make good their reasons for not proceeding, otherwise he should go the length of pronouncing a judgment of false accusation.

You see how well, how seriously, employed were our days; and these were followed by the most agreeable relaxations. We were invited each day to dinner, a modest one considering that it was given by a prince. Sometimes we listened to the performances of artists, at others the evening was spent in the most delightful converse. On the last day, as we were taking our departure (so attentive is Cæsar in his kindness), presents were sent us.

To me, however, not only the important character of our inquiries, the distinction attaching to the Council, and the charm and simplicity with which we were entertained, but also the locality itself, was particularly delightful. The loveliest of villas is surrounded by the most verdant fields: it borders on the shore, in the bight of which a harbour is at this moment being made. The left-hand mole of this is protected by the strongest works; that on the right hand is under construction. In the mouth of the harbour an island* is rising, to confront and break the force of the sea carried in by the winds, and to afford an entrance to ships on either side. Its rise, moreover, is worth seeing, from the ingenuity displayed. Huge stones are brought in by ships of the largest burden; these being thrown into the sea,† one upon another, remain fixed by their own weight, and are gradually constructed into a kind of rampart. Its stony ridge already appears above the surface, scattering and throwing to a great height the waves which break on it. There is a mighty din there, and the surrounding sea is white with foam. Moles of cement‡ will be added to the stones, which, as time goes on, will pro-

* What we call a breakwater.

† *Contra haec alia super alia dejecta.* None of the commentators know what to do with "contra." Gesner has included it in brackets. I have not attempted to render it, believing it to be corrupt.

‡ *Pilae* substructions, composed of a kind of cement and other materials, which hardened under the water.

duce an imitation of a natural island. This harbour will bear, indeed already bears, the name of its author, and will be in the highest degree serviceable; for the coast for a very long distance is without any harbour, and will now have the advantage of this place of refuge.

(32.)

To Quintilian.

Though you are personally the most modest of men in your desires, and though you have brought up your daughter as it was proper that your daughter and the grandchild of Tutilius should be brought up, nevertheless, as she is about to be married to a most honourable gentleman, Nonius Celer, who by reason of his public employments has a certain necessity imposed on him of making an appearance, she should be provided with a wardrobe and an establishment suitable to her husband's station; matters which, though they will not add to her position, will be adornments and proper accompaniments to it. Furthermore, I know that while you are rich in mental endowments, your fortune is but small. According I lay claim to a share of your burden, and in the character of a second father to our dear girl, contribute towards her portion fifty thousand sesterces.* I would contribute a larger sum, were it not that it is by the smallness of my present alone that I have the assurance of being able to prevail on your modesty not to refuse it.

* About £400.

(33.)

To Romanus.

"'Throw, throw your tasks aside,' great Vulcan cried;
'Off with your works begun.'" *

Whether you be reading or writing anything, "throw it aside," "off with it," be the order, and take in hand *my speech*, divine as were those arms of Vulcan—would it be possible to speak more boastfully?—well, in sober truth, an excellent one for a production of mine, and it is enough for me to compete with myself. This speech is on behalf of Attia Viriola, and is rendered remarkable by the station of the individual, the singularity of the case, and the importance of the decision. For, this lady, of lofty birth, married to a man of Prætorian rank, and disinherited by her octogenarian father within eleven days of the time when, smitten with love, he had brought home a stepmother for her, sought to recover her paternal property by a process instituted before the four courts. One hundred and eighty judges sat (for so many are brought together in the four chambers); there was a vast crowd of assistants on either side, and the benches were thronged; moreover a dense circle of spectators, consisting of many rows, encircled the spacious court. Add to this that the tribune was packed, and even in the galleries of the building women as well as men were hanging over in their eagerness to hear, which was difficult, and to see, which was easy. Great was the expectation of fathers and daughters and even of stepmothers. The results which followed were various: for in two chambers we gained

* The words in which Vulcan, in the Æneid, bids the Cyclopes throw aside what they were engaged on, in order to devote their attention to the manufacture of arms for Æneas.

the verdict, in the same number we lost it.* Truly a notable and marvellous thing that in the same cause, before the same judges, with the same advocates and on the same occasion, so great a diversity should occur by chance, yet so as not to look like chance. The step-mother was beaten, who had herself been made heir to a sixth part of the fortune, and Suberinus † was beaten, who, after being disinherited by his own father, had with singular impudence claimed the property of another person's father, though he did not dare to sue for that of his own parent.

I have given you these details, first that you might learn from my letter what you could not have learnt from the speech, and secondly (for I will discover my arts) that you might have the greater pleasure in reading the speech, if you seemed to yourself not so much to be reading, as to be present at the trial. And though it be lengthy, I do not despair of its obtaining the same favour as a very short one. For its freshness is preserved by the abundance of the subject-matter, the niceness of the distinctions, by many short narratives and by the variety of the diction. There are many passages in it (I should not dare say this save to you) of an elevated kind, many of an argumentative, and many too of a subtle character. For in the midst of the former powerful and lofty passages, the necessity often interposed itself of dealing with matters of account, and almost of calling for table and counters, so that a Centumviral trial became all of a sudden changed into the form

* Everything connected with the court of the Centumviri is so obscure that we have no certainty as to the meaning of this. It would seem that the whole four chambers sat together, and that each chamber gave a separate judgment. But, then, in the present case, the court being equally divided, one would think there would be no verdict or judgment. Others suppose the meaning to be that Pliny got judgment in his favour on two points and lost it on two others. But this is against the text, which distinctly refers to four chambers, and says nothing of four points. It is also against the next sentence. For there would be nothing "notable and marvellous" in different issues being differently decided.

† Apparently, the step-mother's son.

of a private inquiry. I gave full sails to my indignation, to my wrath, to my grief, and in so mighty a cause, as though on a great sea, was carried by many winds. In short, some of our friends generally consider this speech as being the "Pro Ctesiphonte" of my speeches;* whether truly, you will most easily judge, who have them all so well in your memory as to be able to compare them with this, while reading this alone.

(34.)

To Maximus.

You have acted rightly in promising a gladiatorial show to our friends at Verona, who have long loved and respected and honoured you. And it was thence you obtained that wife who was so dear to you and so deservedly appreciated; to whose memory either a construction of some kind was due, or else a spectacle, and such a one as this in preference to any other, as being most suited to a death-celebration. Besides, you were entreated with so much unanimity that to refuse would have seemed not so much resolution as obstinacy. In this also you have acted admirably, in being so ready and liberal in furnishing the show; for these are points too in which large-mindness is shown. I could have wished that the panthers, of which you bought such numbers, had come to hand on the day appointed, but though *they* failed, from being detained by stress of weather, *you* at any rate deserved to get the credit of what it was no fault of yours that you did not exhibit.

* Being to the rest of my orations of Ctesiphon is to his — my *chef* what Demosthenes' speech on behalf *d'œuvre*, in fact.

BOOK VII.

(1.)

To Geminus.

The obstinacy of this illness of yours alarms me, and, though knowing how great is your self-control, I fear it may even affect your temper. Accordingly, I urge you to bear up against it with patience. This is the laudable, the wholesome course, and what I advise is within the power of human nature. For my part, at any rate, when in health, I am in the habit of dealing with my people after this fashion: "It is assuredly my hope that, in case of falling sick, I shall desire nothing to be ashamed of or repented of; yet, should the disease get the better of me, I warn you to give me nothing, except by permission of the doctors; and know that if you *do* give me anything, I shall punish the act in the same way as others punish a refusal to comply with their wishes." Moreover, on the occasion of my being burnt up by a raging fever, when, freed at last from the crisis and anointed, I received a drink from the doctor, I held out my pulse and bid him feel it, and thereupon gave back the cup which I had already raised to my lips. Afterwards, on the twentieth day of my illness, when I was being prepared for the bath, and noticed that the doctors were all of a sudden speaking together in an undertone, I inquired the reason. They replied that I might possibly bathe with safety, yet not altogether without some apprehension. "Where," said I, "is the necessity?" and so placidly and calmly laying aside all hope of the bath, which I had seemed on the point of being conveyed to, I composed my mind and my looks for the privation no less readily than just before for the bath.

All this I have written to you, firstly, that my warning might not be unaccompanied by an example, and next, that for the future I myself might be bound to the same course of self-control, through having engaged myself to it by this letter as by a kind of pledge.

(2.)

To Justus.

How can it be consistent that in one and the same breath you declare you are engrossed by incessant occupations and yet are longing for my productions, which even from idle folks can scarce obtain a moment of their useless time? I will therefore permit your summer to go by, with its cares and its agitations, and not till winter (when it is presumable that in the evenings at any rate you will possibly have some leisure) will I consider which of my trifles had best be sent you. Meanwhile, it is enough if my letters do not prove a nuisance to you—but they must be, so they shall be cut shorter. Adieu.

(3.)

To Præsens.

Still the same persistency on your part in remaining at one time in Lucania, at another in Campania! "Why," say you, "I myself am a Lucanian and my wife is a Campanian." Good grounds these for a more protracted absence from town; but not, however, for an uninterrupted one. Why not return then at some time to Rome, where consideration and honour and friendships, distinguished as well as humble, await you. How long will you continue to play the king, waking when you choose and sleeping as long as you choose? How long are your dress-shoes to be nowhere, your toga to have a holiday, your whole day to be free? It is time that you should revisit our worries, if with this object only, that those pleasures of yours may

not languish through satiety. Pay your court to others for a brief while, that it may be the more agreeable to you to be courted in turn. Jostle in this crowd of ours, in order to enjoy solitude. But why foolishly retard him whom I am striving to recall? For, perhaps, you will be urged by this very language of mine more and more to wrap yourself up in your ease, which I don't want to see broken up, but merely intermitted. For, just as if I were giving you a dinner I should intermingle with sweet dishes some that were sharp-flavoured and piquant, that your taste, deadened and cloyed by the former, might receive a fresh stimulus from the latter, so now I exhort you to season your most delectable mode of life now and then with, so to speak, a trifling admixture of acids.

(4.)

To Pontius.

You say you have read my hendecasyllables; you would even seek to know how it was that I began to write them, who am, in your estimation, a serious personage, and, as I myself admit, no trifler. I was at no time (to go back a long way) averse from the poetic art; nay more, when fourteen years of age, I wrote a Greek tragedy. "What sort of one?" you ask. I can't say; it was *called* a tragedy. Afterwards, when, on my return from military service, I was detained by adverse winds in the island of Icaria, I wrote some Latin elegiacs on the sea there and the island itself. At times I have tried my hand at heroic metre; now for the first time at hendecasyllables, which were originated and first saw the light in this wise. The chapters of Asinius Gallus on the comparison between his father and Cicero were being read to me at my house at Laurentum, when an epigram of Cicero on his favourite Tiro occurred. Afterwards, on retiring for a midday siesta (for it was summer time) when sleep failed to steal over

me, I began to ponder how the greatest orators not only esteemed this kind of literary effort as a recreation, but also took credit for it. I applied my mind, and, contrary to my expectation, after such long disuse, in a remarkably short space of time scribbled the following verses on the very subject which had induced me to write:—

"When Gallus I read, who pretends that his sire
Had far more than Tully poetical fire:
The wisest of men, I perceived, held it fit
To temper his wisdom with love and with wit;
For Tully, grave Tully, in amorous strains
Of the frauds of his paramour Tiro complains;
That, faithless to love and to pleasure untrue,
From his promised embrace the arch wanton withdrew;
Then I said to my heart, 'Why should'st thou conceal
The sweetest of passions, the love which you feel?
Yes, fly, wanton Muse, and proclaim it around,
Thy Pliny has loved and his Tiro has found.'
The coy one so artful, who sweetly denies,
And from the sweet flame, but to heighten it, flies." *

I passed on to elegiacs; these, too, I delivered myself of with no less celerity, and, corrupted by this facility, I added some iambics. Then, on my return to town, I read them to my friends. They approved them. Afterwards I attempted a variety of metres in my leisure moments, and principally when travelling. At last I determined, in accordance with the example set by many, to complete one separate volume of hendecasyllables, nor do I repent having done so. It is read, transcribed, indeed sung, and accompanied—by the Greeks, too, whom their relish for this little book has taught Latin—sometimes on the guitar, at other times on the lyre. But why talk so big? However, poets are privileged to rave. And yet I do not speak from my own but from others' judgments, who, whether they judge rightly or wrongly, at any rate delight me. I only pray that posterity likewise may judge, whether rightly or wrongly, in the same way.

* I have given Melmoth's version.

(5.)

To Calpurnia, his Wife.

It is incredible what a yearning for you possesses me. The reason of this is first of all my love for you, and next that we have not been accustomed to be separated. Hence it is that I spend a great part of my nights wakeful over your image; hence in the day, at the times when I was in the habit of looking in on you, my feet of their own accord take me—as the phrase runs most truly—to your apartment; hence in the end, sick at heart and sad, as one who has been denied admittance, I retire from the deserted threshold. One time alone is free from these torments, that in which I am worn out in the Forum by the law-suits of my friends. It is for you to judge what my life must be when it finds its repose in labour, its solace in miseries and cares!

(6.)

To Macrinus.

A strange and remarkable circumstance has happened to Varenus,* though it be still of an uncertain character. The Bithynians are reported to have given up his prosecution on the ground of its having been undertaken without consideration. Reported, do I say? The agent of the province is here, and has brought a decree of its council to Cæsar, to many of our leading men, and to us, the advocates of Varenus, into the bargain. Still, that same Magnus holds out; more than this, he worries with the utmost pertinacity the worthy Nigrinus, through whom he made application to the consuls that Varenus should be ordered to produce his accounts. I assisted Varenus, but now only as a friend, having made up my mind to hold my tongue. For nothing could be more disadvan-

* See Letters v. 20 and vi. 13.

tageous than that I, appointed his advocate by the Senate, should defend, as though lying under an accusation, a person to whom it imported that he should appear not to be accused at all. However, when at the close of Nigrinus's application the consuls turned their eyes towards me, "You will know," said I, "that I have good reason for my silence when you have heard the real agents of the province." In answer to this, "To whom have they been sent?" asked Nigrinus. Said I, "To *me*, as well as to others. I am in possession of the decree of the province." To which he returned, "*You* may feel satisfied." I replied, "If you are satisfied the other way, it is possible that I, too, may be satisfied, and with better reason." Upon this the provincial agent, Polyænus, set forth the grounds for annulling the prosecution, and demanded that there should be no prejudgment of the matter in view of Cæsar's cognisance of it. Magnus spoke in reply, and Polyænus a second time. For my part, merely interspersing an occasional and brief remark, I observed in general a profound silence. For I have learnt that there are times when it is no less the part of an orator to hold his tongue than to speak. And I can even remember that in the case of certain persons capitally accused, I have served them still better by my silence than by the most elaborate oratory.

A mother who had lost her son (for what prohibits me, though my reason for writing this letter was a different one, from discussions of a professional kind?) accused to the prince his freedmen, who were also co-heirs with her, of forgery and poisoning, and obtained Julius Servianus for judge. I defended the accused, and that too in a very crowded court; for the case attracted great notice, and, besides, the most celebrated talent was employed on either side. The trial ended by the slaves being put to the question,* and the result was in favour of the accused. Subsequently the mother applied to the prince, declaring that she had discovered fresh evidence. Suburanus was

* To the torture.

directed to hear the case thus decided, reargued, in the event of her producing any new matter. The mother's counsel was Julius Africanus, a grandson of that orator after hearing whom Passienus Crispus exclaimed, "Finely spoken, by Hercules, finely spoken! But to what end all this fine speaking?" This orator's grandson, a young man of talent, but not much judgment, after he had talked at great length and filled up the time allotted him, "I beg," said he, "Suburanus, that you would permit me to add just one word." Then I, when all were looking to me with the expectation of hearing a long reply, spoke thus, "I should have replied, if Africanus had added just that 'one word,' which, I doubt not, would have contained all his new matter." I cannot readily call to mind having ever obtained so much approval by speaking, as I did then by not speaking. Similarly on the present occasion I was lauded and welcomed for having so far held my tongue on behalf of Varenus.* The consuls, in accordance with the application of Polyænus, have kept the whole matter open for the prince, whose decision I await in suspense. For, the day when it is given will either put us at rest and at ease for Varenus, or will force us to resume our interrupted labours with renewed anxiety.

(7.)

To Saturninus.

I thanked our friend Priscus lately, and have done so again—since you so bade me—with the greatest pleasure. It is indeed particularly delightful to me that two such excellent men and dear friends of mine should be so knit together as to think yourselves under a reciprocal obligation. For he, too, professes to derive the highest gratification from your intimacy, and engages with you in a truly noble contest of mutual affection, which time itself

* *Hactenus tacui.* Keil reads *hactenus non tacui*, which gives a very forced sense.

will increase. I am sorry to hear that you are engrossed by business, for this reason, that you are unable to devote yourself to literature. However, when you have concluded one case before a judge, and (as you tell me) settled the other in person, you will begin, first, to enjoy your leisure where you are, and then, when you have had enough of it, to think of returning to us.

(8.)

To Priscus.

I cannot express my delight at our friend Saturninus speaking to me of his deep thankfulness to you in letter after letter. Go on as you have begun, and cherish with all possible affection this excellent man, from whose friendship you will derive great satisfaction, and for no short time either; for abounding as he is in all good qualities, he is principally distinguished for the remarkable constancy of his affections.

(9.)

To Fuscus.

You ask me after what manner I think you ought to pursue your studies in the retirement which you have now for some time enjoyed. It will be particularly profitable —and so it is laid down by many—to translate either from Greek into Latin, or from Latin into Greek. This is a kind of exercise which will furnish you with propriety and brilliancy of expression, a great supply of ornamental turns, force in exposition, and, moreover, by imitation of the best models, a faculty of inventing what will resemble them. At the same time, what might have eluded the notice of a reader cannot escape a translator. By this means taste and judgment are acquired. It will do you no harm if—taking what you have read with sufficient atten-

tion to recollect the matter and the argument—you write down the substance in a spirit of rivalry, and then compare it with what you have read, carefully considering what you and what your author have put in a preferable way. Great will be your joy if you have bettered him in some places; great your shame if he has bettered you in everything. It will sometimes be permissible to select the best known parts, and to compete with the choicest passages. This contest, though a daring one, will not be impertinent, because it is carried on in private. Though, for the matter of that, we see many who have undertaken this kind of competition with great credit, and who, by reason of not despairing, have outstripped those whom they thought it sufficient to follow in the wake of. You may also take in hand again what you have written, after you have forgotten it, and then retain much of it, throw out more, insert some things, and rewrite others. This is an irksome and extremely tedious task, but which the difficulty itself renders profitable—to warm to one's work afresh, and resume one's swing after it has been enfeebled and has ceased, and, finally, to insert fresh members, so to speak, in a completed framework, yet so as not to disturb what was there before.

I know that just now you have a particular affection for oratory, but I would not on that account advise you always to adopt that contentious, and, if I may so term it, warlike style. For as soils are refreshed by varying and changing the seeds, so are our minds by exercising the thoughts now in one direction, now in another. I should wish you occasionally to take up some historical topic. I should also wish you to write a letter with especial pains. For oftentimes, even in an oration, a necessity occurs, not only for historical, but almost for poetical treatment, and a concise and pure style is acquired by letter-writing. Even poetry is a fitting relaxation. I don't say long and sustained poems (for such as these can only be elaborated with full leisure), but of that lively and short kind which

form a suitable interruption to occupations and business, however important. We call them poetic sports. But these sports sometimes attain to no less fame than serious effusions. Nay, more (for why should I not exhort you to verse-making by verse?):—

> As yielding wax the artist's skill commands,
> Submissive shaped beneath his forming hands;
> Now dreadful stands in arms a Mars confessed,
> Or now with Venus' softer air impressed;
> Now by the mould a wanton Cupid lies,
> Now shines, severely chaste, a Pallas wise;
> As not alone to quench the sacred flame
> The sacred fountain pours her friendly stream,
> But sweetly gliding through the flowery green,
> Spreads glad refreshment o'er the smiling scene;
> So, formed by science, should the ductile mind
> Receive, distinct, each various art refined.*

And so the greatest orators, who were at the same time the greatest of men, either exercised or delighted themselves, nay, rather both exercised *and* delighted themselves. For it is marvellous how, by means of these small compositions, the mind is at once exerted and refreshed. There is room in them for love, hatred, wrath, pity, humour, everything, in short, which has a place in daily life, as well as in the Forum and its trials. There is in these, too, the same advantage as in other kinds of poetry, that, after acquitting ourselves of the necessities imposed by metre, we learn to rejoice in the freedom of prose, and that which comparison shows to be the easier for us we write with all the more pleasure.

You have now got, perhaps, even more than you required. One thing, however, has been omitted, for I have not said what I thought you ought to read, and yet I did say it when telling you what ought to be written. Do you mind and make a careful selection of authors, each of his own kind. For they say that one ought to read much, not many things. Who these authors are is so

* Melmoth s translation, with a slight verbal alteration.

well-known and established that there is no necessity for pointing them out; and, independently of this, I have so immoderately extended this letter, that, while advising you on the way in which you ought to conduct your studies, I have been robbing you of time for study. Resume, then, your note-books, and either write something in accordance with these suggestions, or go on with the particular work you had begun.

(10.)

To Macrinus.

As I myself, when I have learnt the beginning of a story, long to tack to it the ending, which has in a manner been forcibly separated from it, so I suppose that you too would like to learn the remainder about Varenus and the Bithynians.* The cause was pleaded by Polyænus on one side, and Magnus on the other. At the conclusion of their speeches, "Neither party," said Cæsar, "shall have to complain of delay; it shall be *my* care to ascertain the wishes of the province." Meanwhile Varenus has obtained a good deal. For, indeed, how doubtful it must be whether a man is rightly accused, when it is uncertain whether he be accused at all? All that remains is that the province should not once more approve of what it is said to have condemned, and thus repent of its own repentance.

(11.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

You are surprised that Hermes, my freedman, should have sold to Corellia the five-twelfth share which was left me in an estate (without waiting for the auction, though I had ordered the property to be advertised), at the rate of

* See Letter 6 of this Book.

seven hundred thousand sesterces for the whole.* You add that the estate could be sold for nine hundred thousand,† and hence you are more particular in inquiring whether I am prepared to stand by what he has done. I certainly do stand by it, for reasons you will now learn, for I am anxious that you should approve, and my co-heirs should excuse, my separating myself from them under the compulsion of a still higher obligation. I have a regard and profound respect for Corellia, first of all as being the sister of Corellius Rufus, whose memory is in the highest degree sacred in my eyes, and next as the bosom friend of my mother. Ties of long standing unite me to her husband also, Minicius Justus, a man of the loftiest character, and very strong ones united me to her son, to such an extent indeed that, during my Prætorship, he presided at the shows which I gave. Corellia, when I was lately in those parts, intimated to me her desire to own some property upon our Larian lake. I offered her, out of my estates, anything she liked, at her own price, always excepting what had come to me from my mother and father, for I could not part with these, even to Corellia. So when this inheritance had fallen to me, containing the lands in question, I wrote to her that they would be offered for sale. Hermes was the bearer of my letter, and on her urgently requesting that he would at once dispose of my portion to her, he complied. You see how completely I must stand to that which has been done by my freedman in compliance with my sentiments. It remains that my co-heirs should bear with a good grace my having sold separately what I was entitled not to sell at all. Nor, indeed, are they compelled to imitate my example, for there are not the same ties between them and Corellia. They can, therefore, look to their own interests; *mine* were replaced by a sense of friendship.

* About £5600. † About £7200.

(12.)

To Minicius.

The enclosed small production was composed by me at your request for your, nay, rather our friend (for what is there that is not common between us?), to use if occasion requires. I have sent it you later than I otherwise should, in order that you may have no time for correcting it, that is to say, pulling it to pieces. However, you will find time, whether for correcting it I know not, but certainly for pulling it to pieces. For you "gentlemen of correct taste" cut out all the best bits. Well, if you do this, I will take it in good part. For I shall afterwards, on some occasion or other, use these same bits on my own account, and obtain applause for them by favour of your contemptuous rejection of them—as, for instance, that passage which you will find marked, and the sense set out in a different way, in what I have written above it: for suspecting that it would seem to you turgid, inasmuch as it is high-sounding and elevated, I thought it not inopportune (in order to spare you torture) to append to it forthwith something conciser and simpler, or rather commoner and worse, but which, in your judgment, will be more appropriate. Why, in sooth, should I not take every opportunity of pursuing and railing at your flimsy taste?

So much, that amidst your occupations you might for once have something to laugh at. What follows is serious. Be sure you repay me the expenses which have come out of my pocket for the special messenger sent herewith. But doubtless, after reading this, you will condemn, not parts of the book only, but the whole book, and, when asked for the price of it, will declare that it is worth no price at all!

(13.)

To Ferox.

One and the same letter of yours intimates to me that you are, and that you are not, engaged in literary studies. Do I talk enigmas? So it must be till I express my meaning more clearly. For while it denies that you are studying, it is so elegant that it could only have been written by a student; or else you are the most fortunate of men if you can turn out such compositions as these as the fruits of idleness and leisure.

(14.)

To Corellia.

You, for your part, have acted most honourably in begging and insisting with so much earnestness that I would order the purchase-money of the estate to be received from you, not at the rate of seven hundred thousand sesterces—that at which you bought it from my freedman—but at the rate of nine hundred thousand,* that at which you compounded for the duty of five per cent. with the farmers of the revenue.† In my turn, I beg and insist you will consider, not only what befits you, but what befits me, and will suffer me, in this one particular, to oppose your wishes in the same spirit as on all other occasions I am wont to exhibit in complying with them.

(15.)

To Saturninus.

You ask what I am about. What you know. I am greatly tried by my official duties, and at the beck and call

* See Letter 11.

† *Quanti a publicanis partem vicesimam emisti.* The collectors claimed a twentieth part of the inherited "buy back," by a sum of money, the transaction amounting to what we should call paying a five per cent. *ad valorem* succession duty with which

of my friends. Occasionally I study, to be able to do which, not occasionally, but exclusively and uninterruptedly, would be, I dare not say a more proper, but certainly a happier thing. That your occupations are everything but what you could wish would be a subject of regret to me were it not that those occupations are of so noble a character. For to administer the affairs of one's country, and to act as arbitrator for one's friends, this is in the highest degree glorious. I was sure that the society of our friend Priscus would be a pleasure to you. I was acquainted with his straightforwardness and agreeable manners, and now learn by experience, what I was less acquainted with, his grateful disposition, since you write to me that he is so agreeably mindful of our services to him.

(16.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

I have an intimate regard for Calestrius Tiro, who is attached to me both by private and public ties. We served in the army together, and we were Cæsar's Quæstors together. He preceded me in the tribuneship, in virtue of his having children,* but I overtook him in the prætorship—Cæsar having remitted me a year.† I have often enjoyed the retirement of his country seats, and he has often recovered his health at my house. He is now, in the capacity of Proconsul, about to go to the province of Bætica, by way of Ticinum. I hope, nay, am confident, that I shall easily prevail on him to turn out of his way and visit you, if it be your wish to liberate in regular form the slaves whom you have recently manumitted in the presence of your friends.‡ You need not be at all afraid

* By the Lex Papia Poppæa a candidate with several children was preferred to one with fewer or none.

† That is, having allowed me to serve the office of Prætor a year before I was properly eligible.

‡ In his capacity of Proconsul Calestrius Tiro would be able to give legal effect to this informal act of manumission.

that this will inconvenience him, since he would not think a journey round the world too long for my sake. Lay aside, then, that excessive diffidence of yours, and consult your own wishes. It is as agreeable to him to do my bidding as it is to me to do yours.

(17.)

To Celer.

Every one has his own reasons for reciting. Mine, as I have already often said, is this, that in case anything escapes my notice (as certainly things do escape), I may be warned of the fact. And this makes me wonder the more at your writing that there have been some who blamed me for reciting my orations at all—unless, indeed they think that these are the only compositions which need no correction. Of these people I should be glad to inquire why they admit (if, however, they do admit) that a history ought to be recited, which is composed, not with a view to display, but to fidelity and truth? Or why a tragedy, which requires, not a recitation chamber, but a stage and actors? Or why lyric poetry, which requires, not a reader, but the chorus and the lyre? "Oh, but the recitation of these kind of things is now a received usage." Pray, then, is the person to be blamed who originated it? Though, by the way, orations too have often been read aloud both by our countrymen and by the Greeks. "At any rate, it is a work of supererogation to recite what you have already spoken." Granted, if you recite exactly the same thing, to precisely the same people, without a moment's delay. If, however, you make many additions and many changes, if you invite to hear you some fresh people, together with some of those who have heard you before (after an interval, however), why should your reasons for reading aloud what you have already spoken be less acceptable than for publishing the same? "But it is difficult for an oration to give satisfaction when recited."

Well, but this is a point which concerns the pains taken by the reciter, not the reasons for not reciting. Nor, indeed, do I seek approval while reciting, but while being read. Consequently, I neglect no means of improvement. First of all, I go carefully over what I have written by myself; next I read it to two or three people; then I hand it over to others to make their notes on it, and these notes, when in any doubt, I again ponder in company with one or other of them. Last of all, I recite to a larger audience, and, if you will believe me, then it is that I am keenest at correcting; for the ardour of my application is proportioned to my anxiety. Indeed, respect for one's audience and a sense of diffidence are the best of critics. Take it in this way: are you not less perturbed if you are going to address some one person, who, however great his culture, is still a single individual, than if you are going to address a number of people, even though they be uncultured? Do you not, on rising to plead, mistrust yourself, particularly at that moment; at that moment desire, not merely that many things, but that *everything* in your speech could be changed? And that still more strongly if the scene be enlarged and the circle of hearers extended? For we look with apprehension even upon the common folk in their dusky attire. Are you not—if you fancy any part of your opening to be unfavourably received—at once discouraged and prostrated? I presume this is because, in numbers themselves, there is a certain weighty and collective judgment; and while each individual has but a small critical faculty, yet, taken altogether, they have a great deal. Hence Pomponius Secundus—he was a writer of tragedies—if there chanced to be any passage which one of his intimate friends thought of a nature to be left out, while he himself thought it should be retained, used to say, "I appeal to the public!" And accordingly, judging from the silence or the approval of the public, he followed either his own or his friend's opinion. Such importance did he attach to this same public; rightly or wrongly, does not concern me; for it is

not my custom to invite the public, but persons I am sure of and have selected, whom I can look at and trust, whom I can scrutinise singly, and stand in awe of collectively. For M. Cicero's opinion about the pen I hold with regard to fear. Apprehension is the sharpest corrector. The very fact that we reflect we are about to recite acts as a corrector; our entrance into the audience-room, the act of growing pale, our shivering, our looking about us, all these are so many correctors. Consequently, I am not ashamed of my habit, which experience shows me to be a most useful one, and, so far from being deterred by these people's tittle-tattle, I will go further, and ask you if you can tell me of anything to be added to all this. Nothing, indeed, will satisfy my precautions; for I reflect what an important matter it is to deliver anything into the hands of men; and I cannot persuade myself that it is not proper to revise often, and in the company of many, that which one desires should give pleasure at all times and to all people.

(18.)

To Caninius.

You ask my opinion in what way the money which you have offered to our townsfolk for an annual feast may be secured after your decease. While the inquiry does you honour, the decision is not an easy one. Suppose you pay the amount to the municipality? It is to be feared that it may be squandered. Suppose you give land? Being public land, it will be neglected. For my part, I can find nothing better than what I did myself. In lieu of five hundred thousand sesterces,* which I had promised for the maintenance of free boys and girls, I made over to the agent of the public property some lands of mine of much greater value; these I had reconveyed to me on condition of paying thirty thousand sesterces †

* About £4000. See Book i. Letter 8. † About £240.

annually as a rent-charge. In this way the capital of the municipality was made safe and the income was assured; the land itself, in consequence of there being a large margin over the rent-charge, will always find an owner to cultivate it. I am aware that this cost me something more than the amount of my nominal donation, as the lien of the rent-charge has diminished the selling price of a very handsome property. But one is bound to prefer public to private interests, those that are enduring to those that are mortal, and to be much more careful in securing one's benefactions than one's property.

(19.)

To Priscus.

The illness of Fannia torments me. She contracted it while nursing Junia the vestal virgin, originally of her own accord (indeed they are related), and subsequently being further commissioned to do so by the Pontifices; for the virgins, when compelled by violent disease to remove from the court of Vesta's temple, are handed over to the care and custody of married ladies. While Fannia was carefully discharging the office in question, she became involved in this peril. The attacks of fever stick to her, her cough grows upon her, she is in the highest degree emaciated and enfeebled. Only her great soul and spirit —in every way worthy of her husband Helvidius and her father Thrasea—retain their vigour; all else is breaking up in such a way as to prostrate me not merely with apprehension, but with grief as well. Indeed, I do grieve that such an illustrious woman should be snatched from the gaze of the country, which may perhaps never look upon her like again. Oh, what purity was hers! what holiness of life! what nobility of character! what intrepidity of soul! Twice she followed her husband into exile, and a third time was herself banished on her husband's account; for when Senecio was accused of having written certain

publications on the life of Helvidius, and had said, in the course of his defence, that he had been requested to do so by Fannia, upon Mettius Carus asking her, in a menacing tone, "whether she had so requested him," she replied, "I *did* make the request." "Had she furnished him with memoranda for the composition?" "I did furnish him." "Was this with the knowledge of her mother?" "Without her knowledge." In short, not a word did she utter that quailed before the peril. Moreover, she preserved copies of these very publications after the confiscation of her property (though through the exigencies and the terror of that epoch they had been suppressed by a decree of the Senate), kept them, and carried into her exile the cause of her exile.

At the same time she is so pleasant, she is so friendly, and, in short—the privilege of but few—as lovable as she is venerable. Will there be any woman left whom we may hereafter point out to our wives? Will there be any one from whom we may take an example even of manly fortitude? whom, while we still see her and hear her, we may admire as we do the women one reads about? For my part, it seems to me as though her very house were tottering and about to fall torn from its foundations—and this though she still has descendants. For how great must be their virtues and how great their deeds in order to make it clear that she has not perished the last of her race! And there is this additional cause of affliction and torment for me, that I seem to be losing her mother over again—that mother of such a woman; what more illustrious name can I give her?—whom Fannia, as she resembles and recalls to us, so she will take away with her, afflicting me at one and the same time with a fresh and a re-opened wound. I frequented them both and cherished them both; which of them in a greater degree I know not, nor did they desire that a difference should be made. They had my services in prosperity and they had them in adversity. I was their

consoler when they were banished and their avenger when they returned. Yet I did not fully acquit my debt to them, and for this reason am all the more anxious that Fannia should be spared in order that time may be left me for payment. Such are the cares amidst which I have written to you, and if any god shall turn them to joy, I will not complain of my fright.

(20.)

To Tacitus.

I have read your book, and have noted with all possible care what I thought ought to be altered and what left out. For not only is it my habit to tell the truth, but it is also yours to hear it willingly. Indeed, there are none who submit more patiently to correction than those who are most deserving of praise. And now, I am expecting from you *my* book with *your* notes. What a delightful and charming interchange! How it rejoices me that, should posterity take any heed of us at all, it will be universally related in what concord, with what sincerity and fidelity to each other, we lived. It will be a rare and memorable thing for two men pretty nearly equals in points of age and station, and not altogether without a name in literature (I am compelled, you see, to speak in somewhat scant terms of you as well, inasmuch as I am speaking of myself at the same time), each to have furthered the studies of the other. For my part, when I was but a stripling, while you were already flourishing in renown and glory, I yearned to follow after you—both to be accounted and to be "second to you, though great the space between." Yet there were in existence many men of brilliant genius; nevertheless you seemed to me, owing to the similarity of our dispositions, to be the one most capable of being imitated, and most worthy of imitation. I the more rejoice then that, whenever the conversation turns on

intellectual pursuits, we are named together, that to people speaking about you my name at once presents itself. Not but what there are some who are preferred to both of us. But it does not matter to me what place is assigned us, provided we are thus conjoined; for in my estimation to come next to you is to be before all the rest. Moreover, you must have noticed that in wills (unless a testator should happen to be especially intimate with one or the other of us) we receive the same bequests, and in each other's company. All which goes to this, that our mutual affection should be the more ardent when so many are the bonds which constrain us by our studies, our characters, our reputations, and, finally, by the last dispositions of mankind.

(21.)

To Cornutus.

I am all obedience, my dearest colleague, and am attending, as you bid me, to the weakness in my eyes. For I came here in a close carriage, shut in on all sides as in a bedroom, and am abstaining here—with difficulty, but still abstaining—not only from the use of my pen, but even from reading, and study only through my ears. By drawing a curtain, I cause my chamber to be shaded without being darkened. The cloister,* too, by covering up the lower part of the windows, enjoys as much shade as sun. In this way I am carefully learning by degrees to bear the light. I take baths because they are of service, and wine because it does me no harm—very sparingly, however; so I have habituated myself, and now there is some one by me to watch me.†

The present of a fowl, as coming from you, was most acceptable; and though still weak of sight, I had eyes sharp enough to see that it was an extremely plump one.

* *Cryptoporticus.* See ii. 17. † See vii. 1.

(22.)

To Falco.

You will be less surprised at my having been so persistent in begging you to confer a tribuneship upon a friend of mine when you know who and what he is. For now that you have given me your promise, I am able to tell you his name and to describe the personage. Cornelius Minicianus is the man, an ornament to my native district both in position and character. Of illustrious birth and ample fortune, he is as much devoted to study as poor men are wont to be.* At the same time he is a most upright judge, a most undaunted advocate, and a most faithful friend. You will think that a favour has been conferred on you when you have made more intimate acquaintance with a man who is at any rate equal (for I do not wish to speak too boastfully of one who is himself so modest) to any honours and to any titles.†

(23.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

While I rejoice at your being strong enough to go and meet Tiro at Mediolanum,‡ yet that you may continue to preserve that strength, I would beg you not to impose on yourself so great a fatigue, which is opposed to the consideration of your time of life. Nay, further, I enjoin on you to wait for him at home, and, what is more, inside your house, and even inside your chamber. For truly, since he is cherished by me as a brother, he ought not to exact from one whom I look up to as a father an attention which he would have excused in the case of his own father.

* *i.e.*, as those who are required, by want of means, to labour at a profession.

† The stress is on "equal" (*parem*). Whatever honours may be conferred on him, he will be found, if not superior (for I don't wish to puff him unduly), at any rate equal to them.

‡ Milan. See vii. 16.

(24.)

To Geminus.

Ummidia Quadratilla is dead, wanting a little of eighty years, but hale up to the time of her last illness, and with a compactness and vigour of frame surpassing that of matrons in general. She died leaving a will which reflected great credit on her. She made her grandson heir to two-thirds, and her granddaughter to the remaining third of her fortune. The granddaughter I know but slightly, the grandson I have the strongest regard for—a youth of singular merit, and one who deserved to be loved as a relation by others besides his blood connections. In the first place, though conspicuous for personal beauty, he escaped the gossip of the malevolent, both in boyhood and youth. In his four-and-twentieth year he was a husband, and, had the gods so willed it, would have become a father. In the society of a grandmother addicted to pleasure he lived a life of extreme steadiness, and yet of compliance with her wishes. She had pantomimists in her employ, and interested herself more warmly in them than became a woman of her high rank. Neither at the theatre nor at home did Quadratus witness the performances of these men, and she did not require him to do so. I have heard her say herself, when commending to me her grandson's studious pursuits, that being a woman, with that want of occupation which is the lot of the sex, she was in the habit of relieving her mind by a game of draughts, or by watching the performances of her pantomimists; but that whenever she was about to do either of these things she always bade her grandson go off to his studies; and she seemed to me to do this from a sense of what was due to the youth as much as from her love for him.

You will be astonished, and so was I. At the last sacerdotal games, a contest of pantomimists having been

exhibited, as Quadratus and I were leaving the theatre together, said he to me, "Do you know that to-day is the first time I ever saw a freedman of my grandmother's dancing!" Thus the grandson. But, by Hercules, persons who were in no way connected with her, by way of doing honour to Quadratilla—I am ashamed of having said honour—rather by way of discharging their office of toadies—were coursing about the theatre, and jumping and clapping their hands, and admiring and imitating every gesture for the benefit of their patroness, with an accompaniment of sing-song. And now these persons will receive the tiniest of legacies, as a gratuity for enacting the part of claqueurs, from an heir who was never a spectator of these performances.

I have told you all this, because, when anything fresh turns up, you are in general not indisposed to hear it; next, because it is a pleasure to me to renew any subject of joy by writing about it. And I do joy in the family affection shown by the deceased and in the honour paid to so excellent a young man. I am delighted, too, that the house which formerly belonged to C. Cassius (the man who was the chief and founder of the Cassian school) should be in possession of an owner in no way his inferior. For my friend Quadratus will worthily fill it and become it, and once more restore to it its ancient dignity, celebrity, and glory, since there will issue thence as great an orator as Cassius was a jurisconsult.

(25.)

To Rufus.

What a number of learned men there are whom their own modesty or the stillness of their lives conceals and withdraws from fame! Yet we, when about to speak or read in public, stand in apprehension of those only who advertise their learning, whereas such as hold their tongues

show to advantage by their silent reverence for the noblest of pursuits. What I write is written from experience. Terentius Junior, after serving irreproachably in the army, in Equestrian grades,* and also as Procurator of the province of Narbonian Gaul, has retired to his estate, preferring the profoundest retirement to the honours which awaited him. Having been invited to his house, I regarded him as a worthy paterfamilias and a diligent farmer, and was prepared to talk to him on subjects with which I supposed him to be conversant. Indeed, I had begun to do so, when he, with the most learned discourse, recalled me to literature. How neatly he always expresses himself! in what Latin, in what Greek! He is so strong in both languages that he seems chiefly to excel in the one he happens to speak at the moment. How great his reading, how great his memory! You would think he lived at Athens, not in a country-house. In short, he has added to my apprehensions by causing me to be nervous in the presence of these secluded and, so to speak, rough country-folk no less than in that of those whom I know for men of extensive learning. I advise you to the same effect. For just as in camps, so also in this literary arena of ours, there are a good many persons who, though not in uniform, will be found on a close inspection to be girded and armed, and that too with the sharpest of intellects.

(26.)

To Maximus.

The illness of a certain friend lately reminded me that we are best while we are sick. For what sick man is tempted either by avarice or lust? Such an one is not the slave of his amours, has no appetite for honours, is neglectful of riches, and holds the smallest portion of them for enough, seeing that he is about to part with it. *Then*

* Commissions suitable to his equestrian rank.

he remembers that there are gods and that he is a man; he envies no one, admires no one, despises no one; not even to malicious gossip will he pay attention or find food in it. His dreams are of baths and fountains. These form the sum of his anxieties, the sum of his aspirations; he proposes to himself an easy and comfortable existence for the future, that is, a harmless and a happy one, if he has the luck to escape. What philosophers strive to teach with a multitude of words, and even in a multitude of volumes, I am able, therefore, to lay down for your benefit and my own thus briefly: in health we should continue to be such as, in sickness, we promise that we shall be.

(27.)

To Sura.

Our leisure furnishes me with the opportunity of learning from you, and you with that of instructing me. Accordingly, I particularly wish to know whether you think there exist such things as phantoms, possessing an appearance peculiar to themselves, and a certain supernatural power, or that mere empty delusions receive a shape from our fears. For my part, I am led to believe in their existence, especially by what I hear happened to Curtius Rufus. While still in humble circumstances and obscure, he was a hanger-on in the suite of the governor of Africa. While pacing the colonnade one afternoon, there appeared to him a female form of superhuman size and beauty. She informed the terrified man that she was "Africa," and had come to foretell future events; for that he would go to Rome, would fill offices of state there, and would even return to that same province with the highest powers, and die in it. All which things were fulfilled. Moreover, as he touched at Carthage, and was disembarking from his ship, the same form is said to have presented itself to him on the shore. It is certain that, being seized with illness,

and auguring the future from the past, and misfortune from his previous prosperity, he himself abandoned all hope of life, though none of those about him despaired.

Is not the following story again still more appalling and not less marvellous? I will relate it as it was received by me:—

There was at Athens a mansion, spacious and commodious, but of evil repute and dangerous to health. In the dead of night there was a noise as of iron, and, if you listened more closely, a clanking of chains was heard, first of all from a distance, and afterwards hard by. Presently a spectre used to appear, an ancient man sinking with emaciation and squalor, with a long beard and bristly hair, wearing shackles on his legs and fetters on his hands, and shaking them. Hence the inmates, by reason of their fears, passed miserable and horrible nights in sleeplessness. This want of sleep was followed by disease, and, their terrors increasing, by death. For in the daytime as well, though the apparition had departed, yet a reminiscence of it flitted before their eyes, and their dread outlived its cause. The mansion was accordingly deserted, and, condemned to solitude, was entirely abandoned to the dreadful ghost. However, it was advertised, on the chance of some one, ignorant of the fearful curse attached to it, being willing to buy or to rent it. Athenodorus, the philosopher, came to Athens and read the advertisement. When he had been informed of the terms, which were so low as to appear suspicious, he made inquiries, and learnt the whole of the particulars. Yet none the less on that account, nay, all the more readily, did he rent the house. As evening began to draw on, he ordered a sofa to be set for himself in the front part of the house, and called for his note-books, writing implements, and a light. The whole of his servants he dismissed to the interior apartments, and for himself applied his soul, eyes, and hand to composition, that his mind might not, from want of occupation, picture to itself the phantoms of which he had heard, or

any empty terrors. At the commencement there was the universal silence of night. Soon the shaking of irons and the clanking of chains was heard, yet he never raised his eyes nor slackened his pen, but hardened his soul and deadened his ears by its help. The noise grew and approached: now it seemed to be heard at the door, and next inside the door. He looked round, beheld and recognised the figure he had been told of. It was standing and signalling to him with its finger, as though inviting him. He, in reply, made a sign with his hand that it should wait a moment, and applied himself afresh to his tablets and pen. Upon this the figure kept rattling its chains over his head as he wrote. On looking round again, he saw it making the same signal as before, and without delay took up a light and followed it. It moved with a slow step, as though oppressed by its chains, and, after turning into the courtyard of the house, vanished suddenly and left his company. On being thus left to himself, he marked the spot with some grass and leaves which he plucked. Next day he applied to the magistrates, and urged them to have the spot in question dug up. There were found there some bones attached to and intermingled with fetters; the body to which they had belonged, rotted away by time and the soil, had abandoned them thus naked and corroded to the chains. They were collected and interred at the public expense, and the house was ever afterwards free from the spirit, which had obtained due sepulture.

The above story I believe on the strength of those who affirm it. What follows I am myself in a position to affirm to others. I have a freedman, who is not without some knowledge of letters. A younger brother of his was sleeping with him in the same bed. The latter dreamt he saw some one sitting on the couch, who approached a pair of scissors to his head, and even cut the hair from the crown of it. When day dawned he was found to be cropped round the crown, and his locks were discovered

lying about. A very short time afterwards a fresh occurrence of the same kind confirmed the truth of the former one. A lad of mine was sleeping, in company with several others, in the pages' apartment. There came through the windows (so he tells the story) two figures in white tunics, who cut his hair as he lay, and departed the way they came. In his case, too, daylight exhibited him shorn, and his locks scattered around. Nothing remarkable followed, except, perhaps, this, that I was not brought under accusation, as I should have been, if Domitian (in whose reign these events happened) had lived longer. For in his desk was found an information against me which had been presented by Carus; from which circumstance it may be conjectured—inasmuch as it is the custom of accused persons to let their hair grow—that the cutting off of my slaves' hair was a sign of the danger which threatened me being averted.

I beg, then, that you will apply your great learning to this subject. The matter is one which deserves long and deep consideration on your part; nor am I, for my part, undeserving of having the fruits of your wisdom imparted to me. You may even argue on both sides (as your way is), provided you argue more forcibly on one side than the other, so as not to dismiss me in suspense and anxiety, when the very cause of my consulting you has been to have my doubts put an end to.

(28.)

To Septicius.

You say that certain folks have been finding fault with me in your presence, on the ground of my praising my friends immoderately at every opportunity. I plead guilty to the charge, and even hug it to my breast. What indeed can be more to one's credit than the sin of good-nature? Yet who are these people who know my friends

better than I do? However, suppose they do so know them, why grudge me a deception which is the cause of so much happiness to me? For though these friends be not such as they are proclaimed by me, yet I am fortunate in that they seem such to me. Let these persons, then, transfer their mischievous assiduities elsewhere. There is no lack of those who malign their friends under the plea of criticising them. *Me* they will never persuade to think that my friends are too much loved by me.

(29.)

To Montanus.

You will laugh, then you will be indignant, then you will laugh again, when you read what, unless you *do* read it, you never will believe. There stands on the road to Tibur, this side of the first milestone—I noticed it quite lately—a monument to Pallas,* thus inscribed: "To him, the Senate, on account of his faithfulness and loyalty to his patrons, decreed the Prætorian insignia and a sum of fifteen million sesterces.† He was contented with the honour merely." In truth, I have never marvelled to see honours bestowed more frequently by fortune than by discernment; yet this inscription strongly reminded me how farcical and foolish are those which are at times thrown away on such dirt and filth as this; honours which, to crown the matter, this gallows-bird was impudent enough both to accept and to decline, and even, as a sample of modesty, to exhibit to posterity. But why this indignation? It is better to laugh, that these rogues may not fancy they have achieved any mighty result, when their good luck has merely carried them to the point of being subjects for laughter.

* A freedman and favourite of the Emperor Claudius.
† About £120,000.

(30.)

To Genitor.

I am much distressed at your having lost, as you write me word, a pupil of the highest promise. That his illness and death have impeded your studies is of course obvious to me, since you are so careful in the discharge of all friendly offices, and love with so much effusion all those who approve themselves to you. As for me, city business pursues me even to this place. For there are not wanting those who constitute me judge or arbitrator in their affairs. To this must be added the complaints of the rustics, who abuse my ears, as they have a right to do after my long absence. Then there is a pressing necessity for letting my farms, and a very disagreeable one, so rare is it to find suitable tenants. For these reasons I study when I can beg time; still I do study; for I both write and read somewhat. Yet, when reading, I am made sensible by the comparison how bad my own writings are; though you put good heart into me when you compare my treatise in vindication of Helvidius to the oration of Demosthenes against Midias. It is true that I had the latter in my hands while engaged in composing the former; not with the view of rivalling it (that would have been impudence, and almost madness); yet, at any rate, with the view of imitating and following it, as far as the divergence between the two intellects—between a very great and a very small one—and the different character of my case would permit.

(31.)

To Cornutus.

Claudius Pollio desires your affection, and deserves it from the very fact that he desires it, and next because he

loves you of his own accord. And, indeed, none commonly claims this kind of sentiment, save he who himself experiences it. He is, besides, a man of virtue and integrity, free from ambition and modest to excess—if, however, any one can carry modesty to excess. When we served together, I saw what he was made of, and that not merely in the capacity of his comrade in arms. He commanded a squadron of cavalry a thousand strong. I was ordered by the Consular Legate to examine the accounts of the squadrons and cohorts, in the course of which I discovered, not only the extensive and filthy rapacity of certain parties, but also the consummate integrity and scrupulous industry of my friend. Promoted subsequently to the most distinguished charges, he was seduced by no opportunity to deviate from his innate regard for disinterestedness. He was never puffed up by prosperity; never by reason of the variety of offices which he filled did he detract ought from his unvarying reputation for kindliness; and he supported his labours with the same strength of character as that with which he now bears his repose. This repose, however, he has, for a short time, greatly to his credit, broken in upon and laid aside, having been called to assist our friend Corellius, in consequence of the liberality of the Emperor Nerva, in the matter of buying and distributing lands for the public. What a glory, to be sure, to have especially attracted the choice of so distinguished a man, when there was such an ample field for selection. For the regard and the fidelity with which he cherishes his friends, you may trust to the last testamentary dispositions of many among them, and of this number Annius Bassus, a man of the highest respectability. The memory of this Bassus he preserves and prolongs by eulogies, which are, indeed, so full of gratitude, that he has published (for letters too, as well as the other liberal arts, are held in veneration by him) a volume containing his life. A noble thing this, and one to be approved for its very rarity, seeing that most people remember the dead just

so far as to complain of them.* This man, who, believe me, is so eager for your friendship, I would have you receive with open arms and cling to, ay, and welcome, and so love him as though you were repaying a favour. For in the office of friendship, he who has set the example is not one to be placed under an obligation, but rather to be remunerated.

(32.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

I am delighted that the arrival of my friend Tiro was a source of enjoyment to you;† while, as to what you write me word—that the occasion of a Proconsul's presence having offered itself, a number of persons received their freedom—I rejoice especially. For I desire that our native place should be increased in all things, but principally in the number of its citizens, since this forms the surest embellishment of cities. This, too, pleases me—not that I curry favour—but, at any rate, it does please me, to see you add that both you and I were honoured by the expression of thanks and by praise. For, as Xenophon says, "Praise is the sweetest hearing," particularly if you think you deserve it.

(33.)

To Tacitus.

I augur, nor does my augury deceive me, that your histories will be immortal, hence all the more (I will candidly confess it) do I desire to find a place in them. For if it is usually a subject of concern to us that our countenances should be represented by the best artists,

* *i.e.*, for not having been more liberal to them in their wills. *Queri* is similarly used in viii. 18. Gierig and Doering prefer the sense, "remember them just so far as to give vent to some empty lamentations."

† See Letters 16 and 23 of this Book.

ought we not to desire that our deeds may be favoured with a writer and eulogist such as you? I will indicate to you, then, a matter which cannot, however, have escaped your diligence, since it is in the public records; I will indicate it, notwithstanding, that you may the more readily believe how agreeable it will be to me if a deed of mine, the credit of which was increased by its danger, should be set off by your genius and your testimony.

The Senate had assigned me, in company with Herennius Senecio, as counsel for the province of Bætica, against Bæbius Massa, and, on the conviction of Massa, had decreed that his property should be in the custody of the state. Senecio, having ascertained that the Consuls would be at liberty to hear applications, came to me and said, "In the same spirit of harmony in which we have carried out the prosecution enjoined on us, let us go to the Consuls, and beg them not to suffer the property to be squandered which they ought to remain in charge of." I replied, "As we were appointed counsel by the Senate, consider whether our functions have not been discharged, now that the Senate has concluded its investigation." Said he, "Do you impose any limit on yourself that you choose, since there is no tie between *you* and the province except your own good service, and that a recent one. As for *me*, I was both born and have served as a Quæstor in it." Thereupon I replied, "If this be your fixed determination, I will follow you, that if by chance any odium comes of it, it may not be confined to you." We went to the Consuls, and Senecio spoke what the matter comported, to which I subjoined a few remarks. We had scarcely finished speaking, when Massa, crying out that Senecio was satisfying, not his engagement as an advocate, but his acrimony as a personal enemy, accused him of treason.* All stood aghast. I, however, said, "I am afraid, most

* *Impietas.* Some of the commentators suppose that an application to prevent the property (which was now in the nominal charge of the public) from being squandered, contained, or might be held to imply, a reflection on the Emperor (Domitian).

noble Consuls, that Massa by his silence must have taunted me with collusion, in that he did not accuse *me* too of treason." This saying of mine was immediately taken up and afterwards much noised abroad. The late Emperor Nerva (for even while in a private station he paid attention to exhibitions of uprightness in public affairs), in a very weighty communication which he addressed to me, congratulated not only me, but the age, on being blessed with an example (it was thus that he wrote) of the antique kind.

All this, whatever its value, you will make better known, more celebrated, of greater import, though I do not require you to exaggerate what really took place. For not only is history bound not to depart from truth, but also for worthy deeds the truth is quite sufficient.

BOOK VIII.

(1.)

To Septicius.

I have got to the end of my journey comfortably, with this exception, that some of my people have been rendered ill by the scorching heats. Encolpius, indeed, my reader, the delight of my serious as well as my sportive hours, had his throat so irritated by the dust that he spat blood. How sad this will be for himself, and how annoying to me, if one whose whole charm was derived from his literary pursuits, shall become unfitted for those pursuits! Moreover, who will there be to read my small productions as he does, and to take such a pleasure in them as he takes? However, the gods promise better fortune; the spitting of blood has ceased, and the pain has subsided. Add to this that the salubrity of the climate, our country quarters, our retired life, hold out as good a prospect of health as of repose.

(2.)

To Calvisius.

Others set out for their estates that they may return thence the richer; I, that I may return the poorer. I had sold my vintages to certain dealers, who had bought them after a competition. They were attracted by the actual, as compared with the prospective price, and their expectations deceived them. The simple course was to make an equal remission all round; but this would have been hardly fair. Now to me it seems in the highest degree

excellent, as abroad so at home, as in great things so in small, as in things foreign so in one's own, to be diligent in the practice of equity. For if our sins be all of equal importance, so must our good deeds be.* Accordingly, I remitted an eighth part of the purchase-money, and that to all, "that none should leave without my bounty feeling;"† next, I had regard, separately, for those who had invested the largest sums in their purchases, for these had at the same time profited me more, and themselves suffered a greater loss. Hence, in the case of those who had bought for more than ten thousand sesterces,‡ to the above eighth part, which was common to all, and, so to speak, a public gift, I added a tenth part of the amount by which they had exceeded the ten thousand. I am afraid that I have not made myself sufficiently intelligible, and will explain my way of reckoning more clearly. Suppose any persons to have bought for fifteen thousand,§ these would have got back not only an eighth of fifteen thousand, but a tenth of five thousand. Further, on reflecting that some had paid me a considerable portion of what they owed, others a trifle, others nothing at all, it seemed to me by no means just that those who were not on a level in the discharge of their obligations should be put on a level in regard to the favour of abatement.‖ So, again, I remitted to those who had made payments a tenth part of that which they had paid. For this seemed the most fitting means, with reference to the past, of requiting them singly, in proportion to the deserts of each; and, with reference to the future, of enticing them not only to buy but to make payment. This calculation of mine, or this act of complaisance (whichever it may have been), cost me a large sum, but it was worth the outlay. For, through-

* This is a reference to the maxim of the Stoics that all sins are on a par. If this be so, says Pliny, it holds good of virtuous actions, which it therefore imports us to exhibit in small things as well as great, &c.

† Virgil, Æn. v. 305.

‡ About £80.

§ About £120.

‖ Or, 'by the generosity of my remissions.'

out the whole district, both the novelty of this remission, and also its form, are applauded. Even the people themselves, whom I treated, as the saying goes, not with one and the same measuring-rule, but with distinctions and gradations, left me all the more obliged to me, in proportion to the rectitude and probity of each, having experienced that it is not with me that—

"The good and bad an equal honour find." *

(3.)

To Sparsus.

You intimate that the book I last sent you is of all my works the one which pleases you most. Such is also the opinion of a friend of mine, a man of profound learning. And this is an additional inducement to me to believe that neither of you are mistaken, because it is not credible that *both* are mistaken, and because, in any case, I am ready to flatter myself. For I desire that my latest performances should always appear the most perfect, and hence, even at this moment, favour—as against the above book—an oration which I have lately published, and which shall be communicated to you so soon as I shall find a careful messenger. I have aroused your expectations, which I fear that the oration, when you have it in hand, will disappoint. Meanwhile, however, expect it as though it would be sure to please you—and perhaps it *may* please.

(4.)

To Caninius.

You do admirably in preparing to write of the Dacian war. For where is the subject at the same time so recent, so abounding in incident, so vast, in short, so poetical,

* Homer, Iliad ii. 319.

and—though dealing in events of the most real character—so like fable? You will tell of new rivers set flowing over the earth,* new bridges thrown over rivers, mountain precipices occupied by camps, of a king who had despaired of nothing driven out of his palace, ay, and driven out of his life; besides this, of triumphs twice celebrated, one having been the first over a hitherto unconquered people, the other, the last.

The single drawback, yet an important one, is, that to equal all this in description must be an immense and arduous task even for your genius, rising though it does to the loftiest heights, and growing in proportion to the vastness of its undertakings. And there must be not a little labour in this too, in preventing barbarous and savage names (among the first, that of the King himself) from showing their repugnance to Greek metre. But there is nothing which skill and attention will not mitigate, even though they may fail to overcome it. Moreover, if it is permitted to Homer to contract, lengthen, and alter names, both soft and Greek, to suit the smoothness of his verse, why should not a similar licence be permitted to you, particularly when it results not from affectation but from necessity? Accordingly, poet-fashion, having invoked the gods—and among them *him* whose acts and works and counsels you are about to relate—loosen your ropes, spread your sails, and be carried on (if ever you have been) by the full force of your genius! Why indeed may not I too deal poetically with a poet? This much I bargain for at once: you must send me all your first fruits as soon as you have brought them to perfection; nay, rather, even before you have perfected them, just as they are, all fresh and unformed, and still resembling things at their birth. You will reply that what is taken

* Dio Cassius relates that Decebalus, the Dacian king, diverted the course of a river in order to bury some treasures under its bed, and then caused it to revert to its former channel. Trajan diverted it a second time and secured the treasure. The commentators suppose this event to be alluded to here.

piecemeal cannot please equally with that which is continuous, or what is rudimentary like that which is complete. I know it. And therefore they shall be judged of by me too as things merely begun; they shall be regarded as parts, and shall await your finishing touches in my desk. Suffer me to have this pledge, in addition to the others, of your friendship; that I be made acquainted even with such things as you would wish none to be acquainted with. In short, it may be that I shall admire and praise your writings more highly in proportion as you are slow and cautious about sending them; but I shall love *you* more highly, and praise *you* more highly, the greater your speed and the less your caution in doing so.

(5.)

To Geminus.

Our friend Macrinus has received a severe blow. He has lost his wife, a model woman, even if she had lived in old times. With her he spent thirty-nine years without a quarrel and without offence. How great the respect she paid her husband, while herself worthy of respect in the highest degree! How numerous, how lofty the virtues, which, gathered from different ages,* were assembled and united in her person. Macrinus indeed has one great solace, in that he retained so great a blessing for so long a time; and yet, for this reason, he is all the more embittered by the loss of it. For the enjoyment of pleasures increases the pain of being deprived of them. I am therefore in a state of anxiety about my dear friend, till such time as he shall be able to admit of being diverted from his sorrow and allow his wound to heal. And this will be brought about by nothing so much as by necessity itself, by lapse of time, and satiety of grief.

* See vi. 26, which will best explain this, "a boy in candour, a young man in geniality, an elder in seriousness;" and again v. 16 init.

(6.)

To Montanus.

You must have learnt by this time from my letter how I lately remarked a monument to Pallas with this inscription on it: "To him the Senate, on account of his faithfulness and loyalty to his patrons, decreed the Prætorian insignia and a sum of fifteen million sesterces. He was contented with the honour merely.* Subsequently it seemed to me worth while to hunt up the decree itself. I found it, and it was so verbose and extravagant, that the above extremely fulsome inscription seems modest and even humble by its side. Let—I will not say the Africani and Achaici and Numantini of old—but the men that are near to us, the Marii, Sullas, Pompeys (I will go no further),—let these compare themselves with Pallas, and they will fall short of the praises accorded to him. Am I to suppose the men who thus decreed to have been humourists, or cravens? I would call them humourists if such humour became a Senate. Cravens, then? But no one is in such a craven condition that he can be forced to such acts. Was the cause, then, ambition and the yearning for advancement? But who so demented as to wish for advancement at the price of his own and the public disgrace, in a society where the advantage to be derived from the loftiest dignity should consist in being able to take the lead in—eulogising Pallas in the Senate? I pass by the circumstance that the Prætorian insignia are offered to Pallas, though a slave, inasmuch as they are offered by slaves. I pass by their decreeing "that he should not only be exhorted, but actually compelled to the use of golden rings;" for it was opposed to the august dignity of the Senate for a man of Prætorian rank to wear iron ones These are trifling matters, which may be passed over. But this is noteworthy, that "on account of Pallas the

* See Book vii. Letter 29.

Senate" (and the Senate-house was not purified after this!)—"on Pallas's account the Senate returns thanks to Cæsar, in that his highness himself has bestowed the most honorable mention on him, and has also accorded to the Senate the faculty of testifying towards him its good will." What indeed could be more glorious for the Senate than that it should appear sufficiently grateful to Pallas? This is added: "That Pallas, to whom all of them, to the best of each man's abilities, confess their obligations, may enjoy, as he so richly deserves to do, the fruits of his matchless integrity and his matchless energy." You would suppose that the limits of the Empire had been extended, that armies had been rescued for the State. To this is tacked on, "Inasmuch as to the Senate and the people no more agreeable occasion for their liberality could be exhibited than the good fortune of being able to add to the means of so disinterested and faithful a guardian of the prince's revenues." This was at that time the aspiration of the Senate, this was the chief delight of the people, this was the most agreeable occasion for liberality: to have the good fortune to add to the means of Pallas by squandering the public revenues! See what follows: "That it had been the wish of the Senate, for its part, to decree to him a gift of fifteen million sesterces out of the treasury, and the more his mind was remote from desires of this kind, the more earnestly did they pray the Father of the State to compel him to yield to the Senate." This, to be sure, was alone wanting: that Pallas should be dealt with by public authority; that Pallas in person should be entreated to yield to the Senate; that Cæsar himself should be called in to plead against this arrogant self-denial, and to prevent his spurning the fifteen million sesterces. Spurn them he did—the only way in which, after the public offer to him of so vast a sum, he could show his arrogance still more than by accepting it. Yet the Senate, in a tone of complaint, praised even this act in the following words: "But inasmuch as the most

excellent Prince and Father of the State, at the request of Pallas, has willed that that portion of the decree which related to the grant to him out of the treasury of fifteen million sesterces should be annulled; the Senate hereby witnessed, that albeit it had of its own good will, and in accordance with his merits, initiated a decree of the above sum, among the other honours, to Pallas on account of his integrity and diligence; yet, as they do not deem it lawful to set themselves against the will of their prince in any matter, so in this matter too they submit themselves to it."

Picture to yourself Pallas interposing his veto, as it were, on the decree of the Senate, and restricting the honours paid to himself; refusing the fifteen millions as too much, after accepting the Prætorian insignia as of smaller account. Picture to yourself Cæsar complying with the prayers, or rather the commands, of his freedman in presence of the Senate, for the freedman *commands* his patron when he is able to petition him in the Senate. Picture to yourself the Senate continually witnessing that it had initiated a decree of this sum, among the other honours, to Pallas, in accordance with his merits and its good will, and that it would have persevered in its intention if it had not been for its compliance with the prince's will, which it was not lawful to set one's self against in any matter. So then, in order that Pallas should not carry off the fifteen millions from the treasury, his own modesty and the compliance of the Senate were requisite, which latter, in this particular case, would not have complied if they had thought it lawful not to comply in any matter whatever.

Do you think this is the end? Wait a bit and hear something still stronger. "And inasmuch as it is of advantage that the gracious disposition of the prince, ever prompt to honour and reward the deserving, should be everywhere exhibited to view, and chiefly in those places where the persons charged with the administration

of his affairs may be stimulated to imitation, and where the highly proved faithfulness and integrity of Pallas may by his example provoke a zeal for laudable emulation; the message read by the most excellent prince before this most honourable house on the tenth day before the Kalends of February last past, together with the decrees passed by the Senate on these matters, shall be inscribed on brass, and the brass in question shall be affixed to the statue in armour of the late Emperor Julius." It did not seem enough that the Senate-house should witness such disgraceful proceedings; a place of great resort was selected for publishing them, where contemporaries should read them, and posterity as well. It was decided that the brass should be inscribed with all the honours of this haughty slave, both those which he repudiated and those which (as far as those who decreed them were concerned) he had borne.* The Prætorian insignia of Pallas were cut and carved on public and enduring monuments, just for all the world like ancient treaties, just like sacred laws! Such was the—how to name the quality I know not—of the prince, of the Senate, of Pallas himself, that they wished to have affixed before the eyes of all, Pallas his impudence, Cæsar his submissiveness, the Senate its baseness. Nor was there any shame felt in veiling this infamy with a show of reason—an exquisite and admirable reason to be sure!—that on the strength of the rewards bestowed on Pallas the others might be provoked to the zeal of emulation! So cheap were honours held, even those which Pallas did not disdain. Yet there were found persons of respectable birth who sought for and desired what they saw given to a freedman and held out to slaves. How glad I am that I did not fall upon those times, of which I am just as much ashamed as if I had lived in them. Nor do I doubt that you will be similarly

* The allusion is to the Prætorian insignia, which he accepted. The Senate put him in the position of one who really had discharged the Prætorship.

impressed, for I know you have the soul of an honest man and a freeman. Hence you will be the more ready to think that, though I may have carried my indignation in certain places to a height unsuitable to a letter, yet my complaints are rather below than above the mark.

(7.)

To Tacitus.

Not as one master to another, nor again "as one disciple to another" (for so you write it), but as master to a disciple —for you are the master, I the opposite; more than that, you are recalling me to school, while I am still prolonging my holidays—have you sent your book to me. Come, now, could I have produced a more topsy-turvy sentence than the above?*—by this very means proving that I am one who ought not to be called, let alone your master, even your disciple. However, I will take on me the part of master, and exercise on your book the right you have bestowed on me, and all the more freely that I am not going to send you in the meanwhile any writing of mine for you to revenge yourself upon.

(8.)

To Romanus.

Have you seen, at any time, the source of the Clitumnus? If you have not as yet—and I fancy you have not, for otherwise you would have told me of it—go and see what I (and I am ashamed of having been so slow about it) lately saw. There rises a hill of moderate size, wooded and shaded by ancient cypresses, at the base of which the spring emerges, forced out through many

* *Num potui longius hyperbaton facere?* 'Could I have carried the figure of Hyperbaton (or transposition) further?' The allusion is to the words *librum misisti*, 'have you sent your book,' which are awkwardly kept till the end of the sentence. The humour of this is, of course, miserable, like all Pliny's ponderous attempts at facetiousness.

but unequal channels, and after struggling through a troubled pool of its own formation, opens out to the view with broad expanse, clear and transparent, so that you are able to count the small coins thrown into it and the glistening pebbles. Thence it is impelled, not by the slope of the ground, but by its own very abundance, and, as it were, weight; now but a source, now already a noble river, and one actually capable of bearing ships, which, even when they come in opposite directions, and with contrary effort are holding a different course, it suffers to pass each other, and carries on their way. Such is the strength and rapidity of its current, though over a plane surface, that it is not assisted by oars, and, when it is faced, it is only with extreme difficulty that it can be overcome by oars or punt-poles. It is an agreeable change for those who are afloat for sport and pastime to vary toil by repose or repose by toil, according as they shift their course. The banks are clothed with a quantity of ashes and poplars, which the transparent river reflects in succession by so many green images, just as though they were submerged in it. The coldness of the water might vie with that of snow, and its colour does not yield to that of snow.

Hard by is a temple ancient and venerable. Clitumnus stands there in person, clothed and adorned with the prætexta. Oracular responses indicate the prophetic power in addition to the presence of the divinity. Scattered around are a number of chapels and as many gods. Each of these has his own worship and his own name, some of them even their own springs. For besides that spring, which is, as it were, the parent of the rest, there are smaller ones, separated from the fountain-head, but nevertheless flowing into the river, which is spanned by a bridge. This marks the boundary between what is sacred and what is open to ordinary use. Above bridge navigation only is permitted; below, one may bathe as well. The people of Hispellum, to whom the late Emperor

Augustus assigned this locality, furnish baths at the public expense, and they also furnish lodgings. Nor is there a lack of villas, which, owing to the attractions of the river, stand on its borders. In short, there will be nothing there from which you may not derive pleasure; you will even be able to study, and will read a variety of productions by a variety of people, inscribed on every column and every wall in honour of the spring and the god. Many of these you will approve of, some you will laugh at—and yet, no; *you,* with your usual good-nature, will laugh at none of them.

(9.)

To Ursus.

For a long time I have taken neither book nor pen in hand. For a long time I have not known what rest is or repose, or, in short, that state, so idle yet so agreeable, of doing nothing and being nothing. To such a degree do the multitude of my friends' affairs debar me from seclution and study. For no studies are of such importance that the office of friendship should be abandoned on their account—indeed, that this office should be most religiously guarded is a matter which is taught us by these very studies.

(10.)

To Fabatus, his Wife's Grandfather.

The stronger your desire to see great-grandchildren of yours born of us, the more you will grieve to hear that your granddaughter has had a miscarriage, while, girl-like, she did not know that she was with child, and, in consequence, omitted certain things which should be observed by women in that state, and did other things which should have been omitted. She has expiated her

mistake at the expense of a great lesson, having been brought into extreme peril. Hence, while you must necessarily be grieved at your old age being deprived of descendants, who had been, so to speak, prepared for you, yet you ought, at the same time, to thank the gods who refuse you great-grandchildren for the present, in such a way as to preserve the life of your granddaughter, and who will yet bestow on you those great-grandchildren, the expectation of whom is made surer by this very fruitfulness of my wife, though, to be sure, it has been ascertained under rather unfavourable circumstances. I am now exhorting, admonishing, and confirming you by the same methods as I employ towards myself. Nor, indeed, can great-grandchildren be desired by you more ardently than are children by me, children to whom I think myself destined to bequeath, on your side and on my own, an easy road to honours, names widely known, and family images which will endure. May they only be born, and turn this sorrow of ours into joy!

(11.)

To Hispulla.

When I think of your affection for your brother's daughter, surpassing in tenderness even the indulgence of a mother, I feel that I ought to begin by announcing what ought to come later, in order that joy may take first possession of you and so leave no room for anxiety. And yet I am apprehensive that, even after rejoicing, you will return to your fears; that, while delighted at Calpurnia's being freed from peril, you will shudder at the same time at her having been imperilled. She is cheerful *now*, and restored to herself and to me; she begins to regain strength, and by her progress towards recovery to measure the crisis she has passed through. She was, in fact,* in the most critical condition (this be said without evil

* *Alioqui* here seems equivalent to the French "*du reste.*"

omen!), through no personal fault, rather through some fault due to her age. Hence her miscarriage, and the sad proofs of an unsuspected pregnancy. Accordingly, though it has not been your good fortune to assuage your regret for your lost brother by means of a grandson or granddaughter of his, yet remember that is a blessing which is delayed rather than denied, since *she* is safe from whom we may hope for it. At the same time excuse to your father a mishap which women are always more prepared to look on with indulgence.

(12.)

To Minicianus.

I must beg to be excused for just this one day. Titinius Capito is going to recite, and I hardly know whether it be more my duty or my desire to hear him. He is an excellent man, and one to be numbered among the special illustrations of our age; he cultivates literature, and loves, cherishes, and advances men of letters; he is the port, the harbour, the place of refuge for a number of those who do anything in the way of composition; an example to all; lastly, a restorer and reformer of letters, which are now in their decline. He lends his house to people who recite, and frequents audiences—and that not merely at his own abode—with rare good-nature; *me* certainly, provided he is in town, he has never failed. Besides, the nobler the incentive to gratitude, the more shabby it would be not to show one's self grateful. Pray, if I were harassed by legal proceedings, should I consider myself bound to one who appeared to my recognisances; and now, because all my business, all my care is with literature, shall I be less obliged to one who frequents me with so much assiduity, in a matter which, if not the only one, is certainly the most important one which can lay me under an obligation? Yet, if I owed him no return, no mutual good office, so to speak, yet I should be attracted either by the genius of

the man, which is so admirable, so grand, so gentle even when most serious, or else by the noble character of his theme. He is writing of the deaths of illustrious men, and among them of some who were very dear to me. I seem, then, to be discharging an office of piety when, in the case of those whose obsequies I could not attend, I am present at what may be termed their funeral eulogies, which, though late in time, are on that account all the more truthful.

(13.)

To Genialis.

I approve of your having read my little books in company with your father. It pertains to your advancement to learn from a man of the highest eloquence what deserves praise and what censure, and, at the same time, to be so trained as to learn to speak the truth. You see whom you ought to follow, in whose footsteps you ought to tread. Happy fellow! who have had the luck in one and the same person to meet with a model so excellent and so nearly related to you; * who, in short, have *him* to imitate, above all others, whom nature willed that you should most resemble.

(14.)

To Aristo.

As you are so deeply versed in civil and constitutional law † (of which senatorial law forms a part), I desire to

* *Cui contigit unum atque idem optimum et conjunctissimum exemplar.* Keil has *vivum atque idem*, &c. The former seems the reading of the MSS., and I think it may stand, though (as Gesner points out) it would be more usual to write *cui contigit unum optimum atque idem conjunctissimum exemplar.*

† *Privatum jus et publicum.* These terms cannot be exactly rendered. *Jus privatum* may be rendered by "the laws relating to the transactions of citizens as between themselves," and *jus publicum*, "the laws relating to transactions in which the commonwealth is concerned." For full information on this subject, see Mr. George Long's excursus on "Judicia" in his edition of Cicero's Orations, vol. i.

learn from you particularly whether I did or did not make a mistake in the Senate on a recent occasion, that I may be instructed, not with a view to the past (for it would be too late for that), but to the future, should anything of a like kind present itself.

You will say, "Why inquire about what you ought to know?" Because the slavery of past times has introduced a certain oblivion and ignorance, as well of all other excellent sciences, so also of senatorial law. For few have the patience to be willing to learn what they will never have to practise. Add to this, that it is difficult to retain what you *have* learnt unless you *do* practise it. Thus it happened that the restoration of liberty surprised us in an untrained and inexperienced condition, and, enflamed by her charms, we are obliged to do certain things before we are masters of them. On the other hand, it was the ancient usage that we should learn from our elders, not only through our ears, but through our eyes as well, what we ourselves should presently have to do, and, by a kind of succession, to hand down to our juniors. Hence striplings were forthwith inured to service in the camps, that they might be habituated to command by obedience, and to act the part of leaders while learning to follow. Hence such as were to be candidates for public offices stationed themselves by the doors of the Senate-house, and were spectators of the national council before becoming members of it. Each had his own father for an instructor, or to him who had no father the oldest and most illustrious citizens stood in the place of one. What are the privileges of those who introduce motions, what the rights of those who pronounce on them, what the power of the magistrates, and the liberty accorded to the remaining Senators, where to yield and where to resist, what is the time for silence and what the limit of speech, how to distinguish between the parts of a conflicting proposition, how those who would add anything to a previous proposal may execute

their purpose; in short, the whole practice of the Senate was taught by example, the surest mode of instruction.

Yet we, when youths, were, to be sure, in the camps. Yes, but at a time when prowess was suspected and inactivity was prized; when the leaders were without authority and the soldiers without shame; when the supreme control was nowhere and obedience nowhere; when all things were in a state of solution and confusion, and even inversion; in short, of a character to be forgotten rather than remembered. We also had a view of the Senate, but a cowering and speechless Senate, at a time when it was dangerous to speak according to one's wishes and vile to speak against them. What could be learnt at such a period? and what could be the advantage of learning? when the Senate was summoned either to fall into a profound sleep or to sanction some atrocious villany, and, detained now for the purpose of exciting laughter, now for that of inflicting pain, pronounced decisions which were never serious, though oftentimes sad.

These same evils we witnessed and endured for many years after we had ourselves become senators and sharers in them, by which means our intellects were *permanently* dulled, broken, and bruised. It is but a short time (every time is short in proportion as it is happy) since we have learnt with pleasure what we are, and can practise with pleasure what we know. And this gives me a greater right to ask, first, that you will pardon my mistake, if there be a mistake; next, that you would apply to it your remedial learning, whose care it has always been to investigate constitutional in the same way as civil law, what is ancient in the same way as what is modern, what is rare equally with what is common. And indeed I am of opinion that the kind of point which I am submitting to you was either not very familiar, or else actually unknown in practice to those predecessors of ours whose constant and varied experience left them in ignorance of scarce anything. Hence, not only shall I be the more readily excused if I have chanced

to trip, but you will be the more entitled to credit if you can instruct me on a point which it is uncertain to me whether you have studied.

The debate was about the freedmen of Afranius Dexter, the Consul, who had perished either by his own or his servants' hands, either through their crime or their obedience to his commands, it is uncertain which. As to these persons, one senator ("Who?" you ask. It was I; but this is of no consequence) opined that, having been put to the question, they should be exempted from punishment; a second, that they should be banished to an island; a third, that they should suffer death. So great was the difference between these proposals, that they could only be taken singly. For what is there in common between putting to death and banishing? Nothing more, by Hercules, than between banishing and acquitting. Though, to be sure, a proposal for acquitting is somewhat nearer to one for banishing than would be a proposal for putting to death, since both the former leave life untouched, while the last takes it away. Yet, meanwhile, those who were for the punishment of death and those who were for banishment sat together, and by a temporary simulation deferred the discord which underlay their concord. I demanded that the proper number of these three propositions should be established, and that two of them should not be joined together in a short truce. Hence I insisted that those who were for the infliction of the capital penalty should leave the side of those who were for banishment, and that those who were shortly about to differ among themselves should not in the interim be united in opposition to the party who were for an acquittal; because it was of very little consequence that they disagreed with the same proposal, seeing that they had previously agreed to different ones. This too seemed to me particularly strange, that while he who had pronounced for banishing the freedmen and inflicting the last penalty on the slaves had been compelled to divide his vote, yet he who was for

punishing the freedmen with death should be told off among those who were for banishing them. For if it had been right that the proposition of one should be divided, as comprehending two different things, I could not discover in what way the propositions could be joined together of two persons who pronounced themselves so differently. And indeed permit me—in your hearing precisely as there, and though the question is settled precisely as though it were still alive—to give you the reasons for my opinion, and to put together now at my ease what I then threw out disjointedly amidst many stormy interruptions.

Let us suppose three judges in all to have been assigned to this cause, and that the decision of one of these had been that the freedmen should die; of the second, that they should be banished; of the third, that they should be acquitted. Pray, should two of these opinions, by their united strength, destroy the last? Or, taken separately, should not each of them be worth just what the other is, so that the first can no more be connected with the second than the second with the third? It results that, in the Senate as well, votes ought to be reckoned as being opposed to each other, which are given as being different from each other. What if one and the same man were to pronounce for death and banishment? would it be possible for these persons both to die and to be banished in accordance with this single vote? Indeed, could that be considered one vote at all which conjoined things so diverse? How, then, when one pronounces for punishing them with death, and another for banishing them, can that appear to be one vote because it is pronounced by two, which would not appear one vote if it were pronounced by one? What! does not the law clearly teach that the votes for death and those for banishment should be separated, when it orders divisions to be taken in this manner:—"Those who are of this opinion to this side; those who are of any other

opinion* to the side which accords with your opinion." Examine these words singly and weigh them. "Those who are of this opinion," that is to say, who think the men should be banished, "to this side"—that is to say, to the side on which the senator who has made the motion for banishment is sitting. From this it is clear that those who are in favour of putting them to death cannot remain on the same side. "Those who are of any other opinion." You observe that the law, not content with saying "other," has added to it "any." Can there be a doubt, then, that those who put to death hold an entirely different opinion from those who banish? "To that side which accords with your opinion." Does not the law itself seem to call, to compel, to drive, those who differ to the opposite side? Does not the Consul, even, point out to every one, and that not merely in the customary form of words, but with his hand and by his gestures, the place where he is to remain or to which he is to pass over? "But it will happen that if the votes for death and those for banishment be divided, the vote in favour of acquittal may prevail." What does this matter to the persons voting? It certainly does not become them to strive by every art and every calculation to prevent a more merciful decision from being carried. "It is proper, in any case, that those who are for the death penalty and those who are for banishment should first be compared with those who acquit, and afterwards with each other. As, for example, at certain of the shows, some individual is separated and reserved by lot to compete with the victor, so in the Senate there are certain first and second trials of strength, and the one of two proposals which comes out victorious is waited on by a third." Need I say that if the first proposal be carried the remaining ones are put an end to? How, then, can propositions be

* *Qui alia omnia sentitis* was really a euphemism for "You who are of a contrary opinion." Pliny, however, takes it here in the way most suitable for his argument.

joined on a common ground* for which no place can be found subsequently? To repeat this more clearly, when the motion for banishment is made, if those who are for death do not at once go to the other side, it will be in vain that they will differ at a subsequent stage from those with whom they have voted just before.†

But why do I seem to be teaching when I want to learn whether these motions should have been divided, whether they should have been gone into singly? To be sure I obtained what I demanded; none the less, however, do I ask whether I ought to have made the demand. In what way was it obtained? Why, the senator who had moved that the extreme penalty should be inflicted (overpowered, I do not know whether by the legality, but certainly by the equity of my demand), threw up his own motion, and went over to the side of him who was for banishment: fearing, no doubt, that if the motions were taken separately—and, but for his action, it seemed likely that they would be—the one for acquittal would obtain a majority. And, indeed, there were many more of that one party than in either of the other two taken singly. Then those senators, too, who were led by his authority, thus left to themselves after he had gone over, abandoned a proposal which had been forsaken by its own author, and followed in his species of desertion the person whom they followed in his lead. So out of three proposals two resulted, and of these two one prevailed, the third being extinguished, which, as it could not overcome the two others, had to choose by which of the two it would be defeated.‡

* *Unus atque idem locus.* I omit *non* before *unus*, with Gierig.

† Pliny means that if the motion for punishment is put, and those who are for death—instead of going over, as they should do, to the side of *alia omnia*, viz., those who hold any other opinion—vote on the side of those who are for banishment, they ought henceforth to be bound by that vote.

‡ A German critic has remarked of this epistle, "The very great profusion of words with which a simple question is treated shows scanty practice in business-like habits." (Teuffel, "Roman Literature," § 335). It may be added that the letter gives a very poor opinion of the Senate; all this verbiage about a point which an English schoolboy would at once

(15.)

To Junior.

I have laid a burden on you by the despatch of so many volumes at once. However, I have burdened you, in the first place, because you had insisted on my doing so, and, in the next place, because you had written to me that the vintage was so slender in your parts as to make me see very clearly that you would have leisure (as the common phrase runs) "to pluck a book." * We have the same announcement from my own small estates. Consequently, on my side too, I shall be able to write something for you to read, if only paper can be bought anywhere. Should it be rough or porous, I shall either have not to write at all, or shall perforce make a smudge of whatever I write, be it good or bad.

(16.)

To Paternus.

I am prostrated by the ailments of my servants, by deaths among them, too, and of young ones into the bargain. I have two consolations, by no means on a par with the greatness of my sorrow, still consolations. One is my readiness in setting them free (for I do not seem to have lost quite prematurely such as had already gained their freedom when I lost them); the other is, that I permit even my slaves to make quasi-testamentary dispositions, observing these just as though they were legal documents. They enjoin and request whatever they choose, and I obey as if under orders. They distribute,

determine! The first question to be put to the Senate was clearly "guilty or not guilty." In the event of "guilty" carrying the day (as it seems would have been the case in this instance), the question of the penalty arose, "Banishment or death?"

* *Legere librum*, a pun on the double sense of *legere*, "to gather" and "to read," which cannot well be rendered in English.

give, and bequeath—at least, within the limits of the household. For to slaves the household is a kind of state, and stands in the place of a community.

Still, though soothed by these consolations, I am dispirited and broken by reason of the identical humanity of disposition which has prompted me to these same concessions. Yet I would not on that account be made harder, while not ignoring that others style mishaps of this sort a pecuniary loss and nothing more, and hence seem to themselves great and wise men. As for these, whether they be great and wise, I cannot tell; men they are not. For it is the part of a man to be affected by grief, to feel, yet at the same time to bear up and to admit of consolation, not to be in no need of consolation. However, about all this I have said more perhaps than I ought, yet less than I wished. There is, indeed, a certain pleasure even in grief, particularly if you weep into the bosom of a friend who is prepared to bestow on your tears either his approval or his pardon.

(17.)

To Macrinus.

Is the weather as rough and unsettled with you as it is with us? Here we have constant storms and a succession of inundations. The Tiber has exceeded its channels, and is flowing high over its less elevated banks. Though its force is weakened by an outlet which the Emperor, in his great forethought, has constructed, yet it covers the valleys and pours over the fields, and where the surface is flat it presents itself to the eye in the place of the surface. Hence it forces backwards, as though it went to meet them, the streams which it usually receives and carries down in combination, and by this means covers, with waters not its own, a country which it does not itself touch. The Anio, most charming of rivers, and which on that account had seemed as it were to be invited by and

made to slacken its course near the villas on its banks,* has destroyed and carried off in great part the woods that overshadowed it. It has undermined hills, and, impeded in many places by the mass of falling debris, while seeking its lost way, it has thrown down houses, and risen and swept over their ruins. Those who on loftier ground were not caught by the tempest in question beheld in one place the appliances of wealth and costly furniture; in another, agricultural implements; here, cattle, ploughs, herdsmen; there, the loose herds left to themselves, and among these objects the trunks of trees, or the rafters and roofs of villas, all drifting in wide variety. Nor, indeed, have even those localities to which the river did not ascend been exempted from damage. For, in lieu of the river, there was a continuous downpour, and whirlwinds were precipitated from the clouds, the fences surrounding valuable enclosures were overthrown, public monuments were shaken and even toppled down. Many persons were disabled and overwhelmed and crushed by accidents of this description, and loss of property has been aggravated by mourning.

I am apprehensive that something of the same kind in a proportionate degree may have imperilled you where you are: and I beg you, if there has been nothing of the sort, to have regard to my anxiety with all possible speed. But, if there e'en *has* been, announce *that*, just the same. For the difference is but trifling between suffering misfortunes and anticipating them; except, however, that there is a limit to grief, while there is no limit to fear. Our grief is indeed proportioned to what we know to *have* happened: our fears to what *may* happen.

* Another, and perhaps a better, way of taking this is "The Anio, most voluptuous (*delicatissimus*) of rivers, and which on that account had seemed to be attracted by and to linger near the villas on its banks." Here the Anio is attracted by the beauty of the villas. In the rendering in the text, the villas are attracted by the beauty of the Anio, and invite it. The former accords better with *delicatissimus*, "most voluptuous, most wanton." But either form of this poor conceit will stand.

(18.)

To Rufinus.

False, without doubt, is the vulgar belief that the wills made by men reflect their characters, since Domitius Tullus has shown himself a far better man at his death than in his life. For though he had held himself out as a bait to fortune-hunters, he left as his heiress a daughter who was common to himself and his brother, that is to say, she was his brother's child and he had adopted her. Upon his grandsons he bestowed many very acceptable legacies, and even one on his great-grandson. In short, all his dispositions are replete with just affection, and they seem all the more so in that they were unexpected. Accordingly, various are the comments which are being made all over the city: some speak of him as a hypocrite, without gratitude and without memory, and, while they inveigh against him, betray their own selves by their disgraceful avowals, complaining * as they do of a man who was a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, just as though he had been childless: others, on the contrary, laud him in this very particular that he has frustrated the impudent expectations of men whom thus to deceive, in the present state of society, is an act of prudence. They even add that he was not free to leave any other will behind him; for that he did not so much bequeath property to his daughter as restore that by which he had been enriched through the medium of this same daughter. For, Curtilius Mancia, detesting his son-in-law, Domitius Lucanus (the brother of Tullus), constituted the daughter of the latter—his own grandchild—his heiress, subject to the condition of her having been emancipated from the control of her father. Her father *had* emancipated her, upon which her uncle had adopted her, and the intention

* See vii. 31 and note.

of the will having been cheated in this fashion, one brother—they being joint-owners of their estate—got the emancipated daughter back under the parental authority of the other brother, thanks to his fraudulent adoption, and that too with the most extensive property.

In other cases it seemed as it were the fate of these brothers to become rich even against the strongest inclinations of those who had made them so. Indeed, Domitius Afer, who adopted them, left a will declared before witnesses eighteen years previously, and so highly disapproved by him at a subsequent period that he caused their father's property to be confiscated. Strange, ruthlessness on his part, and strange good fortune on theirs! Ruthlessness in him to cut off from the roll of citizens a man who was his partner in such a matter as that of children: good fortune for them to have as successor in the place of father the very man who had taken off their father. But this property derived from Afer, together with everything else which he had acquired in company with his brother, Tullus was bound to transmit to the daughter of his brother, who had constituted him sole heir and preferred him to his daughter, in order to conciliate his favour. The more praiseworthy is this will which affection, good faith, and honour have dictated; in which, finally, all degrees of relationship are acknowledged according to their several obligations, and acknowledgment is made to the testator's wife as well. She takes some charming country residences and a large sum of money, does this most excellent and long-suffering of wives: ay, and one who deserved all the better of her husband in proportion as she was blamed for marrying him. For this lady, who was of illustrious birth and spotless character, in the decline of life, after a long widowhood, and having aforetime borne children, was thought to have acted with no very good taste in prosecuting a marriage with a rich old man, such a prey to disease that he might well have been an object of disgust even to a wife whom he had wedded in

his youth and strength. In fact, he was crippled and powerless in all his limbs, and could enjoy his vast wealth with his eyes alone: nor could he move on his couch even, save by the help of others. Moreover (indelicate as well as pitiable to relate) he had his teeth washed and brushed for him. He was often heard to say himself, when complaining of the miseries forced on him by his infirmities, that he "daily licked the fingers of his slaves." Yet he lived on, and desired to live, kept up principally by his wife, who, by her steadfastness, had turned her fault in entering on such a marriage into a source of glory.

You have now all the talk of the town, for Tullus constitutes all the talk. The sale of his effects is looked for. Such indeed were his stores, that he has adorned the most extensive gardens, on the same day that he bought them, with statues in great profusion and of great antiquity; he had as many works of the highest art lying neglected in storerooms. In your turn, if there be anything in your parts worth a letter, don't think it a trouble to write. For not only are men's ears gladdened by news, but also we are instructed by examples to regulate our lives.

(19.)

To Maximus.

My delight and my solace is in literary pursuits. There is nothing so joyful that it is not made more joyful, nothing so sad that it is not made less sad, through their means. Hence, when disordered by the sickness of my wife and the critical condition of my servants—indeed, by the deaths of some of them—I fled for refuge to my one comfort in sorrow—my studies. These furnish me with a keener sense of misfortunes, but at the same time with the power of bearing them more patiently. Now, it is my habit, when proposing to give anything to the public, to test it previously by the help of my friends' judgment, and

above all of yours. Accordingly, now, if ever, apply yourself to the book which you will receive with this letter; for I fear that *I* in my sorrowful condition have not sufficiently applied myself to it. I was indeed able to command my grief so far as to write, but not so as to write with a disengaged and cheerful mind. Now, as joy is the profit derived from letters, so do letters in their turn derive a profit from cheerfulness.

(20.)

To Gallus.

Objects such as we are in the habit of undertaking journeys and traversing the sea to make acquaintance with, we neglect when they are situated under our eyes; whether it has been so provided by nature, that, while careless of what is close to us, we run after what is distant, or because the desire for all objects languishes where the opportunity is easy; or else that we defer, as being sure to see them often, sights which it is given us to enjoy whenever we choose. Whatever be the reason, there are a quantity of things in our city, and the neighbourhood of the city, which we do not even know by hearsay, let alone eyesight. Yet if Achaia, Egypt, Asia, had produced these, or any other land fruitful in marvels, and giving them repute too, we should have heard all about, and read all about and explored them. What, at any rate, I had never heard of or seen, I for my part lately heard of and saw at the same time.

My wife's grandfather had pressed me to make an inspection of his estate near Ameria. As I was going over it, a lake lying under us was pointed out to me, named Vadimon; at the same time some incredible circumstances connected with it were related. I reached the lake itself. It is rounded into the shape of a horizontal wheel, regular on all sides, without a bay or obliquity of any kind;

everything is measured to scale and even, as though hollowed and cut out by the hand of an artist. The colour of the water is lighter than dark blue but deeper than bluish green.* It has an odour and a taste of sulphur, and the healing property of mending broken articles.† Its size is small, yet such that it can feel the winds and swell into waves. There is no ship on it (for it is sacred), but floating on it are islands, all of them grassy with reeds and rushes, and other herbage which the swampy soil in its productiveness, or the banks of the lake themselves, bring forth. Each of them has its individual shape and dimensions, but all have their outer edges worn, in consequence of frequently striking either against the shore or against each other, and so rubbing and getting rubbed. All of them are of a like elevation and buoyancy, since their roots descend but a little way below the surface, after the fashion of a ship's keel. These roots can be seen on every side, suspended and at the same time submerged in the water. Occasionally these islands are joined and coupled together, resembling a continent; occasionally they are dispersed by discordant winds; not unfrequently, left to themselves, they float in single tranquillity. Often the smaller ones hang on to the larger, like little boats on to ships of burden; often larger and smaller ones take to a trial, as it were, of each other's speed; then, again, all of them, driven upon the same part of the shore, form, where they have stopped, a promontory, and, sometimes here, sometimes there, conceal or restore to view portions of the lake. It is only when they are in the middle that they do not contract its circumference. It is certain that cattle in pursuit of herbage are in the habit of advancing into these islands, fancying them the edge of the lake, and do not perceive that the soil is moveable till reft from the

* *Viridi pressior.* This might be easily altered into *viridior et pressior*, the reading of some MSS. by a transcriber. Keil prints *viridi * or et pressior*, supposing part of a word to be wanting. *Pressior* is not very clear.

† *Medica vis qua fracta solidantur.* Sulphur was similarly used.

shore—put on board and shipped, so to speak—they see with affright the lake all round them: presently going ashore wherever the wind has carried them, they no more know that they have disembarked than they knew that they had embarked. This same lake discharges itself into a river, which, after presenting itself to the eyes for a short time, loses itself underground, and flows on out of sight. If anything has been thrown into it before its disappearance it will preserve and reproduce the object.

All this I have written to you, believing that it would be no less new and no less agreeable to you than it was to me. For as with me, so with you, too, nothing is so delightful as the works of nature.

(21.)

To Arrianus.

Just as in life, so in literature, I deem it the most excellent course, and the one most in accord with human nature, to mingle the grave with the gay, lest the former should degenerate into morbidness and the latter into sauciness. Led by this consideration, I vary my more serious works with sportive and jocular effusions. For the production in public of these latter, I chose the most fitting time as well as place, and—that they might without delay grow accustomed to a hearing from persons with nothing else to do, and at the dinner-table—in the month of July (when, for the most part, there is an interval of rest from the lawsuits), I arranged my friends with seats furnished with desks in front of the dining-couches. It so chanced that, on the morning of that day, I was unexpectedly called to assist a friend in court, and this furnished me with a ground for making some prefatory remarks. For I entreated that no one would charge me with want of respect for the work in hand, because, when intending to recite (even though only to friends, and to a

small audience, which means to friends again), I had not refrained from the courts and from business. I added that, even in the matter of my writings, I followed this order of preferring duty to pleasure, the serious to the agreeable, and of writing for my friends first, for myself afterwards.

My book was composed of various little pieces, in various metres; for thus it is that we who have not much confidence in our genius are wont to avoid the risk of surfeiting people. I recited two days. The approval of my audience exacted this of me; and yet, though other readers skip certain parts, and take credit for skipping them, I pass over nothing, and even aver to my audiences that I pass over nothing. Indeed, I read the whole that I may correct the whole; and this cannot be the case with those who recite extracts. But, you will say that the latter course is more modest, and perhaps more respectful. Yes; but the former is the more straightforward and the more friendly. For he is friendly who thinks the friendship felt for him to be such that he is not in dread of being wearisome. Otherwise, what is the use of intimates if they only come together for the sake of their own amusement? He is a mere fop, and resembles a stranger, who would rather hear his friend's good book than make it a good one.

I do not doubt that, in accordance with your usual affection for me, you will desire to read, as soon as possible, this newly compounded book. You shall read it, but in a revised form, for this was the object of my recitation. Yet you are already acquainted with many parts of it. These, subsequently either improved, or—which occasionally happens through long delay—altered for the worse, you will discover again, in a new form as it were, and rewritten. For where many changes have been made, even what is left seems to have undergone a change likewise.

(22.)

To Geminus.

You know them, don't you, those men who, slaves to every evil passion, are as indignant at the vices of others as though they envied them, and who are for punishing most severely the persons whom they imitate most closely; whereas, even to those who need no one's indulgence, nothing is more becoming than leniency. More than this, I esteem him the most excellent and the most faultless who so forgives others as though he himself sinned daily, and so abstains from sins as though he forgave no one. Accordingly let us hold to this, in private, in public, in every relation of life; to be implacable to ourselves and easy of entreaty even to those who are unable to make allowances for any but themselves. Let us commit to memory what one of the mildest, and, on that account, among others, one of the greatest of men, Thrasea, used frequently to say "He who hates vices hates mankind."

You will perhaps ask what has moved me to write thus. A certain person recently—but it will be better to tell you when we meet; and yet, on second thoughts, not even then. For I fear that by inveighing against and censuring and recapitulating what I disapprove, I may be violating the very precepts which I am giving at this moment. Let the man, whoever and whatever he is, be nameless; by making him known, example would profit nothing; by leaving him unknown, good-nature will profit much.

(23.)

To Marcellinus.

All literary pursuits, all serious occupations, all amusements, have been banished, driven out, rooted from my

mind by the poignant grief which the death of Julius Avitus has caused me. It was at my house that he put on the *Latus Clavus*.* I assisted him with my support when he was a candidate for office; add to this, that he so loved and revered me that he treated me as the moulder of his character—as his master, so to speak. A rare thing this in the case of our young men. For how few of them will yield, as being inferior, either to the age or the authority of another? They are all at once wise; they all at once know everything; they revere no one; they imitate no one, and are indeed themselves their own models. Not so Avitus, whose chief wisdom was in esteeming others wiser than himself, whose chief erudition was in his desire to learn. He was always seeking some advice, either on the subject of his studies or the duties of life, and he always went away with a sense of being made better. And so he was, either from what he had heard, or at any rate from having inquired. What deference he paid to that most accomplished man Servianus, when the latter was Legate and he was military tribune. He so appreciated and at the same time captivated Servianus that in his march across from Germania to Pannonia he followed him, not as being one of his army, but as a companion and personal attendant. Such was his industry, such his unassuming character, than in his capacity of Quæstor he was no less pleasant and agreeable than useful to his Consuls, of whom he served several. How active, how indefatigable he was in his pursuit of this very office of Ædile, from the enjoyment of which he has been prematurely snatched away! And this it is which greatly aggravates my grief. There present themselves to my eyes his vain labours and fruitless applications, and the honour which he succeeded in deserving only. There returns to my mind that *Latus Clavus* assumed in my house; those first, those last efforts of mine on his behalf; the discourses, the consultations which we held together. I am touched by his own

* See Book ii. Letter 9. It was assumed in some cases, with the *toga virilis*.

youth; I am touched by the misfortune suffered by his family.

He had a mother of great age, a wife whom he had married in her maidenhood a year before, a daughter not long born to him.* So many hopes, so many joys did a single day turn to mourning! Just nominated Ædile, a new-made husband, a new-made father, he has left behind him a dignity never assumed, a childless mother, a widowed wife, an infant daughter who never knew her father. My sorrow is augmented by the fact that it was during my absence from him, and when I was unprepared for the impending misfortune, that I learnt at one and the same time his illness and his decease. Such is my anguish while writing on this subject, and on this subject alone. For indeed just now I can neither think nor speak of anything else.

(24.)

To Maximus.

My affection for you compels me, not to instruct you, for indeed you need no instructor, yet to remind you to bear in memory and practice what you already know, else it were better unknown. Reflect that you are sent to the province of Achaia, that true and genuine Greece, in which civilisation, letters, and even the fruits of the earth, are believed to have been discovered; that you are sent to order the status of free communities—that is, to men who are in the highest sense men, to freemen who are in the highest sense free, who have preserved their natural rights by their virtues, their services, their friendship for us, and, lastly, by compacts and religious sanctions. Respect the gods, their founders, and the names of their gods. Respect their ancient glory, and their very age

* *Quam paulo ante sustulerat*, literally, "whom he had recently taken up from the ground," in allusion to the Roman custom of laying the child at the father's feet.

itself, venerable in the case of men, sacred in the case of cities. Let their antiquity, their great deeds, their fables even, find honour with you. Rifle nothing from any man's dignity or liberty, or even vainglory. Keep before your eyes that this is the land which sent us our legislation, which gave laws, not to the conquered, but to those who asked for them;* that this is Athens to which you go; that this is Lacedæmon which you govern: that to rob these of the shadow still left them, and relics of their liberty, would be harsh, cruel, and barbarous. You see that doctors—although in sickness there is no difference between slave and free—yet treat freemen with greater tenderness and consideration. Bear in mind what each community *has* been, not (with the view of despising it) what it has *ceased* to be. Far from you be all arrogance and asperity. Do not be afraid of contempt. Can *he* be contemned who holds the supreme power and the fasces, unless he be a mean, paltry creature, who begins by contemning himself. Power tries its strength ill by injuring others; veneration is ill acquired by terror; and love is far more efficacious for obtaining one's ends than fear. For, fear vanishes when you have taken your departure, love remains; and as the former turns to hatred, so does the latter to reverence. You, for your part, ought assuredly again and again (for I will repeat myself) to call to mind the title of your office, and to interpret for your own self what and how great a matter it is "to order the status of free communities." For what can be more to the interest of the citizens than order of government? Or what more precious than freedom? Again, what a disgrace if order be exchanged for anarchy and freedom for servitude! Add to this, that you have yourself for a rival; you are weighted by the admirable report of your Quæstorship which you brought back from Bithynia; you are weighted by the testimony of the

* An allusion to the despatch of ambassadors from Rome to Greece for the purpose of being instructed in the laws of Solon, &c., A.U.C. 300.

Emperor, by your Tribuneship and your Prætorship, and by this very legation which has been conferred on you as a kind of recompense. Hence you must the more earnestly strive that you be not reputed to have acted with greater courtesy, integrity, and judgment in a distant province than in a nearer one; among those who are our subjects than among freemen; when despatched by lot than when despatched by the result of deliberate choice; when inexperienced and unknown than when tried and approved; since, as you have often heard and read, it is, in a general way, more disgraceful to lose reputation than not to acquire it.

I beg you to believe (as was said at the beginning) that I have written all this by way of reminder and not of instruction. And yet, after all, by way of instruction too. I am not afraid, forsooth, of having exceeded the limits of affection; nor, seeing that affection should be so strong, is there any danger of its being excessive.

BOOK IX.

(I.)

To Maximus.

I have often recommended you to issue with all speed the productions you have composed whether, in your own defence, or against Plauta—or rather *both* in your own defence *and* against him, for so the occasion required—and now, especially, having heard of his death, I strongly urge, as well as recommend you, to the same effect. For, although you have read them and given them to read to many, yet I would not have any person whatever suppose that you have begun only after his decease what in fact you had completed in his life-time. Let your reputation for intrepidity be intact. And so it will be, if it be known to friends and foes that it was not merely after your enemy's death that the courage to write was born in you, but that you were quite ready for publication and were only forestalled by his death. At the same time you will avoid the reproach

"Unjust are all the insults o'er the dead." *

For that which has been written and read aloud on the subject of a living person, if published, even after his decease, is published, as it were, against a person still living, provided this be done at once. Consequently, if you have anything else in hand, lay it aside for the time. Put the finishing touch to this work, which to me, who have read it formerly, seems long since complete; however, let it now seem so to you too, since not only does the matter

* Homer, Odyssey xxii. 412.

itself require no delay on your part, but a consideration of the particular juncture should cut all delay short.

(2.)

To Sabinus.

You are very obliging in pressing me not only for frequent letters, but for very long ones into the bargain. I have been somewhat chary in this matter, partly from a regard for your avocations, partly from my having been myself much engrossed by matters, in general of small interest, which, however, at the same time distract and weary the attention. Besides, I had no materials for writing more. Nor, indeed, is my situation the same as that of M. Tullius, whose example you invite me to follow. For not merely was he gifted with a most prolific genius, but events in great variety and of great importance supplied that genius with abundant material. How narrow are the limits in which *I* am enclosed, you well know, without my telling you, unless haply I should wish to send you letters of the school-exercise kind, and from the shade of the closet, if I may so express it. But nothing, to my mind, could be less apposite, when I think of your arms, your camps, in fine, your horns and trumpets and sweat and dust and burning suns.

You are now furnished, as I think, with a reasonable excuse, and yet I am not sure that I should wish it to be approved by you. For it is a sign of the highest affection to refuse to make allowance for the shortness of one's friends' letters, even although one may know that it can be satisfactorily accounted for.

(3.)

To Paulinus.

Different men have different ideas on the subject, but I for my part deem that individual the most fortunate who

enjoys to the full the foretaste of a noble and enduring fame, and, assured of posthumous reputation,* lives in the company of his future glory. And, for me indeed, if the prize of immortality were not before my eyes, the usual snug and sound repose would be my choice. For I suppose it is the duty of all men to think of themselves as either immortal or mortal; in the former case, certainly, to contend and to exert themselves; in the latter, to keep quiet, to repose themselves, and not to fatigue their short existence by fleeting efforts; as I see many do, who, by a wretched and at the same time thankless appearance of activity, only attain in the end to a contempt for themselves. All this, which I say daily to myself, I now say to you, that I may leave off saying it to myself, if you dissent; though to be sure you, in your character of one who is always meditating some great and immortal work, will not dissent.

(4.)

To Macrinus.

I should be afraid you would think the oration, which you will receive with this letter, of immoderate length, if it were not of such a kind as to seem to have many beginnings and many endings. For under each separate charge is contained as it were a separate cause. So, at whatever point you begin, or at whatever place you leave off, you will be able to read what next follows both in the light of a new commencement and a connected sequel, and so to pronounce me, if extremely long as to the whole, yet extremely short as to the separate parts.

* *Certus posteritatis.* "With his purpose set on posthumous fame."—Prichard and Bernard's "Selected Letters of Pliny." *Certus* often has this sense of "determined on;" but the rendering in the text is simpler, and, I think, better.

(5.)

To Tiro.

You are acting admirably (I have been enquiring about you, as you see), and pray persevere, in commending your love of justice to the provincials by much kindly consideration; the chief part of which consists in surrounding with your regard all the most respectable citizens, and being so loved by the smaller folk that you may at the same time be approved by the leading people. For many, while they are apprehensive of seeming to give in too much to the interest of the powerful, obtain a reputation for ill-breeding, and even for ill-nature. Of this fault you have kept yourself well clear; I know it. Nevertheless I cannot refrain from bestowing praise on you, under the guise of advice, for maintaining a due mean, so as to preserve the distinctions of ranks and dignities; for, if these are confounded, disordered, and intermingled, nothing can be more unequal than this very equality.

(6.)

To Calvisius.

I have been passing all this time between my writing-tablets and my books in the most delicious calm. "However," you ask, "have you been able to do this in town?" The Circensian games were on,—a species of exhibition which does not attract me even in the faintest degree. There is no novelty, no variety about them, nothing which one is not satisfied with having seen once only. This makes me all the more astonished that so many thousands of persons should have such a childish desire to see, over and over again, horses running, and men standing in chariots. If, at least, they were attracted by the speed of the horses or the skill of the men, there would be some reason in the thing. As it is, it is a bit of cloth that they

applaud, a bit of cloth that they love, and if during the race itself and in the very heat of the contest such and such colours were to change wearers, the favour and applause of the public would change over with them, and the very drivers, the very horses whom they know from afar and whose names they shout out, would all at once be deserted. Such is the influence, such the importance, of a contemptible jacket! I say nothing of the vulgar, itself more contemptible than the jacket; but such is the case with certain persons of standing. When I remember that these can settle down so insatiably to what is so inane, insipid, and tedious, I take some pleasure in the fact that I am not taken by this pleasure.* So, I employ in literature my idle hours, throughout these days which others waste in the idlest of occupations.

(7.)

To Romanus.

You write that you are engaged in building. 'Tis well. I have found my defence; for I build with reason the moment that I do so in your company. Indeed there is this further resemblance between us, that you are building by the sea-side, and I by the Larian Lake. There are several villas of mine on the shore of this lake, but two of them, while they greatly delight me, exercise me in an equal degree. One of them, placed on the rocks, after the fashion of Baiæ, overlooks the lake; another, similarly after the fashion of Baiæ, is at the edge of the lake. Hence I am in the habit of calling the former "Tragedy," and the latter "Comedy," because one is supported as it were by a high buskin, and the other by a low sock.† Each of them has its special charm, which their very diversity renders more agreeable to the possessor of both.

* This jingle is in the original, *Capio aliquam voluptatem, quod hac voluptate non capior.*

† *Cothurnus*, the high boot worn in tragedy. *Socculus*, the slipper worn in comedy.

One enjoys a nearer, the other a more extended view of the lake; one, with a gentle curve, embraces a small bay, the other, situated on a lofty crag, separates two small bays from each other; there a promenade stretches for a long way, in a straight line, along the shore, here it gently curves in the shape of a spacious terrace-walk; one of them does not feel the waves, and the other breaks them. From the former you can look down on the people fishing, from the latter you can fish yourself, and throw your line * from your room, and actually from your sofa almost, just as from a skiff. These are my reasons for adding to each what is wanting, in view of the superabundant advantages already enjoyed by both. But why enter into reasons with you? It will stand for a good reason with you that you are doing the same thing.

(8.)

To Augurinus.

If, after you have praised me, I shall begin to praise you, I am apprehensive of seeming to be repaying a favour rather than proffering a judgment. Yet, though it should seem so, I esteem all your writings to be admirable; chiefly, however, those which are about me. This happens owing to one and the same cause; for not only do you write exceedingly well on the subject of your friends, but I too, as I read, find what is written on the subject of myself exceedingly good.

(9.)

To Colonus.

I particularly applaud you for being so grievously affected by the death of Pomponius Quintianus, that you prolong your regard for the lost one by means of your regrets; not like so many who care only for the living, or

* Literally, "your hook."

rather pretend to care for them, and indeed do not even pretend, except in the case of those whom they see to be prosperous. For they forget the unfortunate, no less than if they were dead. But *your* faithfulness is unfailing, and your constancy in love such that it can be ended only by your death. And, by Hercules, Quintianus was a man who ought to be cherished on the strength of his own example. He loved the successful,* defended the wretched, mourned for the lost. What nobility in his mien to start with! What deliberation in his speech! How evenly balanced his severity and his playfulness! What his love for letters! What his judgment! How dutifully did he live with a father most unlike himself! How the fact of his being the best of sons was no hindrance to his seeming the best of men!† But why do I aggravate your grief? Yet you so loved the young man that you would rather have this, than that silence should be kept about him, particularly by me, by whose commendation you think that his life may be illustrated, his memory prolonged, and that very youth, from which he has been snatched, restored to him.‡

(10.)

To Tacitus.

I am desirous of obeying your precepts, yet such is the scarcity of wild boars that Minerva and Diana (who, according to you, should be worshipped in company) cancannot be brought together. So Minerva alone must be served; gingerly, however, in a manner suitable to retirement and the summer-time. On my road I worked out a

* Or, prosperous: in English, as well as in Latin, this sounds like an ambiguous compliment; but the meaning seems to be: He did not envy them.

† The meaning seems to be that he lived with his father and cherished him, as in duty bound, yet without being suspected of sharing in his vices.

‡ The sense is obscure. Perhaps equivalent to "he may be restored to us with the appearance of youth he wore when he left us."

few things—unmistakeable trifles that deserve to be atonce blotted out—with the kind of garrulity with which talk is scattered about in carriages. I have made some additions to them at my country house, as I did not choose to write anything else. Hence my poetry—which *you* think can be most suitably turned out among groves and woods—is dormant. I have retouched one and another of my small orations. Yet this kind of work is ungrateful and displeasing, and resembles rather the labours than the pleasures of the country.

(11.)

To Geminus.

I have received yours, which has been most agreeable to me, and especially so from your wishing something to be addressed to you such as might be inserted in the Books of Letters.* Material for this will turn up; either precisely that which you indicate, or in preference something else; for in the case of the former there are several objections. Cast your eyes round, and they will occur to you. I did not think there were booksellers at Lyons, and was all the more pleased to learn from your letter that my works have a ready sale there. I am rejoiced that such favour as they have acquired in town, continues to attend them abroad. Indeed, I begin to think that my productions must be tolerably finished, when, in regions so diverse, the judgments of men so widely separated from each other are yet in harmony about them.

* *Libris.* Some books of Pliny's Letters had, it appears, already been published. Geminus, wishing his name to appear in the collection, had asked Pliny to write him a letter such as might be published in a future volume.

(12.)

To Junior.

A certain person was chiding his son for being somewhat too extravagant in his purchases of horses and dogs. Said I to him, when the young man had left us, "Harkee!" have *you* never done what might have been rebuked by *your* father? *Have* done, do I say? Do you not sometimes *do* that which your son, if he were suddenly turned into your father and you into his son, might reprehend with the like severity? Are not all men led by some error or other? Does not one man indulge himself in one respect, and another in another?" Admonished by this example of excessive severity, I have, in accordance with our mutual affection, thus written to you, lest you too should at any time treat your son too sharply and rudely. Reflect, not only that he is a boy, but that you have been one, and so use this your position of father as to remember that you are both a man and the father of a man.

(13.)

To Quadratus.

In proportion to the interest and attention with which you have read the books composed by me, on the subject of the vindication of Helvidius, is the eagerness of your demand that I should write to you in detail on such matters as are not contained in the books, and on such as bear reference to them, in short, as to the whole process of an affair which you were too young to be personally interested in.

After Domitian had been put to death, I deliberated within myself, and resolved that here was a great and noble opportunity for pursuing the guilty, vindicating the unfortunate, and bringing one's self into notice. Further,

among the numerous crimes of numerous people, none seemed more atrocious than that, in the Senate, a Senator should have laid hands on a Senator, a man of prætorian on a man of consular rank, a judge on an accused person. Independently of this, there was a friendship between myself and Helvidius as intimate as there could be with one who, through dread of the times, hid in seclusion his great name, and the great qualities which matched it. I was a friend, too, of Arria and Fannia, one of whom was Helvidius's stepmother, and the other that stepmother's parent. But I was not so much incited by private obligations as by public justice, by the disgraceful character of the deed, by a consideration of the example to be made.

Accordingly, during the first few days of restored liberty, every one on his own account had been at once impeaching and crushing his own private enemies (at least the smaller ones) with a confused and turbulent clamour. I, for my part, deemed it a more temperate and also a more courageous course to attack a monstrous criminal, not by means of the popular resentment of the day, but by means of his own individual crime. So, as soon as that first impulse had sufficiently cooled down, and fury growing daily feebler had come back to a sense of justice—though I was at that time particularly sad, having lately lost my wife—I sent to Anteia, the widow of Helvidius, and asked her to come to me, since my still recent bereavement kept me within doors. On her arrival, "It has been decided," said I, "by me, not to suffer your husband to remain unavenged. Announce this to Arria and Fannia" (they had returned from exile). "Consult yourself, consult them, as to whether you wish to participate in an action in which I need no associate; yet I am not so solicitous about my own glory as to grudge you a share in it." Anteia conveyed the message, and the ladies did not hesitate. The Senate, very opportunely, was to meet within three days.

I always referred everything to Corellius, knowing him for the most far-seeing and wisest man of our time. On this occasion, however, I was content with my own counsel, fearing that he would put his veto on it, for he was inclined to hesitation and caution. But I could not prevail on myself to refrain from intimating to him, the same day, what I was about to do in a matter about which I was not deliberating, having learnt by experience that, where you have made up your mind, it is best not to seek advice from those whose advice you would be bound to obey.

I attended the Senate, begged leave to speak, and spoke for a short time with the greatest approval. When I began to touch on the charge, and to hint at a person to be charged (yet still without naming him), there came reclamations from all sides. Said one, "Let us know who it is that you are accusing out of order!" Another, "Who can be charged before being put in accusation by the Senate?" A third, "Spare us who survive!" I heard them without perturbance or dismay; such strength lies in the goodness of one's cause; and so great a difference does it make in the way of giving you confidence or frightening you, whether people do not *like* what you are doing, or do not *approve* of it. It would be tedious to recount everything that was thrown out from one quarter and another. Last of all the Consul said, "Secundus, when you are called on for your vote, you will be able to speak if you choose." I replied, "You will have accorded me a permission, which up to this time you have accorded to every one." I resumed my seat, and other business was transacted.

Meanwhile, one of my friends of consular rank deeming me to have advanced myself with too much daring and rashness, reproved me in some private and anxious words, recalling me, and warning me to stop. He went so far as to add, "You have made yourself a marked man in the eyes of future Princes." "So be it," said I, "provided

they are bad Princes." Scarce had he departed, when again another, "What daring is this? Whither are you rushing? What dangers are you throwing yourself in the way of? Why trust to the present state of things, while uncertain as to the future? You are attacking a man who is already Præfect of the Treasury, and who will shortly be Consul; a man, besides, supported by such interest and such connections!" He named a certain person, who at that time commanded a powerful and renowned army in the East — not without strong and suspicious rumours being connected with him. To this I answered, "All I've foreseen, and each event have weighed? * Nor will I refuse, if fortune shall so bring it to pass, to suffer for a deed of the highest honour, provided I avenge one of the deepest guilt."

It was now time for pronouncing our opinions. Domitius Apollinaris, Consul-Elect, spoke; there spoke also Fabricius Veiento, Fabius Postumius, and Vettius Proculus, the colleague of Publicius Certus (the person under discussion), who was moreover the stepfather of the wife whom I had lost. After these came Ammius Flaccus. They all of them defended Certus—though he had not yet been named by me—just as though he had been named, and by their defence took up a charge which I had left, so to speak, unattached. What further they said it is not necessary to relate. You have it in the books, for I have gone through the whole, using their own words. Avidius Quietus and Cornutus Tertullus spoke on the other side. Quietus said, "It would be most unjust that the complaints of aggrieved parties should be excluded; that, consequently, the right of presenting their plaints should not be taken from Arria and Fannia; nor was it of any consequence what rank a person belonged to, but what cause he had." Cornutus said "that the consuls had assigned him as guardian to the daughter of Helvidius, at the request of her mother and stepfather,

* Virgil, Æneid vi. 105.

nor would he now endure to desert the duties of his office; in the discharge of which, however, he would set bounds to his own grief, and would merely convey the extremely temperate sentiments of these admirable ladies. They were content to call the attention of the Senate to the bloodthirsty sycophancy of Publicius Certus, and to beg that, in case punishment for guilt of the clearest kind were remitted, he might at any rate be branded by some mark, like that inflicted by the Censor." Upon this, Satrius Rufus made a kind of half-and-half ambiguous speech. "I think," said he, "that injury has been inflicted on Publicius Certus, if he is not acquitted. He has been named by the friends of Arria and Fannia, and he has been named by his own friends. Nor ought we to feel a difficulty about this; for we, the same who now pronounce favourably on the man, will also have to judge him.* If he is innocent, as I hope and wish, and, until something be proved against him, believe, you will be able to acquit him."

So they spoke, in the order in which each was called upon. Then came my turn. I rose and preluded, as in the book, replying to each severally. It was astonishing with what attention, what plaudits, everything that fell from me was received by the very persons who had just before been crying out upon me. Such was the change which ensued, either from the great importance of the affair, or the success of the oration, or the intrepidity of the speaker. I came to an end. Veiento commenced replying, but no one would endure him. There was a great noise and disturbance, so great indeed as to make him say, "I entreat, Conscript Fathers, that you will not compel me to invoke the aid of the Tribune." Upon which, Murena, the Tribune, immediately exclaimed, "I give you leave to speak, most noble Veiento." Even then he was

* The meaning seems to be, "Do not be apprehensive that our present decision in his favour will entirely whitewash him. He will still be subject to be tried by us, in regular form, if evidence is adduced against him."

shouted at. Meanwhile, the Consul called over the names, got through the division, and dismissed the Senate, leaving Veiento still almost on his legs and trying to speak. He complained loudly of this insult (so he called it), citing Homer's line—

"Old man, by younger warriors thou'rt oppressed." *

There was scarce any one in the Senate who did not embrace and salute me, and vie in loading me with praises for having reintroduced the practice, so long interrupted, of consulting the public welfare, at the risk of incurring personal animosities; for having, in short, freed the Senate from the odium which was kindled against it among other orders, as being severe against the rest, and, with a kind of reciprocal connivance, indulgent to Senators alone.

All this took place in the absence of Certus; for he was absent, either because he suspected something of the kind, or (as the excuse was made for him) because he was ill. Cæsar, indeed, did not refer to the Senate any communication with regard to him; nevertheless I obtained what I had aimed at. For the colleague of Certus got the Consulship, and Certus himself was superseded, and what I had said at the end of my speech was completely carried out: "Let him give up, under the best, the distinction which he obtained under the worst of Princes."

Subsequently I put together again my speech, as best I could, and made many additions. It happened by chance (but so as not to appear like chance) that Certus died a victim to disease within a very few days after the publication of my book. I heard people relate how this was the image which flitted before his mind and his eye—he seemed to see me threatening him with a sword. Whether this was true or not I would not venture to say positively; yet it would be to the interest of example that it should be held to be true.

Here you have a letter which, if you consider the limits

* Homer, Il., viii. 102. The words of Diomed to Nestor.

of a letter, is no shorter than the book you have read. But you must lay this to your own account, for not having been contented with the book.

(14.)

To Tacitus.

You are not the man for self-applause; yet there is nothing which I write with more sincerity than what I write about you. Whether posterity will have any care for us I know not, yet we certainly deserve that it should have some: I do not say on account of our genius (that would be arrogance), but on account of our zeal, our labours, our regard for posterity. Let us only pursue the road we have determined on, one which, though it may have conducted but few to sunlight and fame, has yet brought many out of obscurity and oblivion.

(15.)

To Falco.

I fled for refuge to my Tuscan estate, with the view of acting according to my own fancy in all things; but not even in my Tuscan estate is this possible. I am troubled with such numerous applications on all sides from the farmers, and such grumbling ones; productions which I am rather more unwilling to read than my own writings; for even my own writings I read unwillingly. I am retouching certain short speeches, a work which, after a temporary intermission, is insipid and disagreeable. The estate accounts are neglected, as though I were absent. Occasionally, however, I mount my horse, and act the landlord so far as to ride over some portion of the farms, though merely for exercise. Do you keep up your habit, and write me in full (since you see what sort of a countryman I am) of the doings in town.

(16.)

To Mamilianus.

I do not wonder that you have derived the greatest pleasure from such an abundant species of chase, when you write to me, after the manner of historians, that "the numbers could not be counted." For my part, I have neither leisure nor inclination for hunting; no leisure, because my vintage is on hand; no inclination, because the vintage is small. However, in the place of new wine, I am drawing off* some new verses, and, as you are so polite in requiring them, will send them to you as soon as they shall seem to have laid aside their fermentation.

(17.)

To Genitor.

Your letter is to hand, in which you complain that a dinner of the most sumptuous description bored you, in consequence of buffoons, wantons, and fools strolling about the tables. Pray, smooth those wrinkles of yours a bit! To be sure I keep nothing of the kind, yet I bear with those who do. Why don't I keep them? Because I derive not the slightest pleasure either in the way of surprise or gaiety from any exhibition of looseness on the part of a wanton, or sauciness on the part of a buffoon, or silliness on the part of a fool. I am stating to you not my reasons, but my taste. And in truth, how many do you suppose there are who in the same way are offended at the things by which you and I are captivated and allured, deeming them to be partly foolish and partly irksome in a high degree! How many there are who, when a reader, or a performer on the lyre, or a comedian is in-

* *Devehimus.* I cannot help thinking this must be the sense of the word, though I cannot find any precisely similar use of it elsewhere. Otherwise it will be, "I am conveying to you."

introduced, call for their shoes, or remain at table with no less ennui than that with which you sat out these monstrosities, as you style them! Let us then make allowance for other people's amusements, that we may obtain allowance for our own.

(18.)

To Sabinus.

How great has been the attention, the interest, the memory, in fine, with which you have read my small productions, is shown by your letter. You are therefore spontaneously cutting out work for yourself by enticing and alluring me to communicate to you as many as possible of my writings. I will do so, yet in parts at a time, and portioned out, so to speak, lest that very memory of yours which I have to thank should be confused by the constant succession and mass of matter, and, weighted and as it were oppressed, should lose its hold on particulars in consequence of their quantity, and on what has preceded in consequence of what follows.

(19.)

To Ruso.

You intimate to me that you have read in a certain letter of mine how Verginius Rufus ordered this epitaph to be placed on his tomb—

> "Here Rufus lies, who Vindex overcame,
> Not for his own, but for his country's fame." *

You find fault with him for having ordered this; you go so far as to add that Frontinus acted better and more appropriately in forbidding any monument whatever to be erected to himself; and you end by consulting me as to my opinion in either case. I loved both of them. I

* See Book vi. Letter 10.

had the greater admiration for the one whom you find fault with; such admiration, indeed, as to think that he never could be sufficiently praised, though I have now to undertake his defence. I judge all those who have done anything great and memorable to be in the highest deserving, not only of excuse, but actually of praise, if they pursue with eagerness the immortality which they have merited, and strive to prolong the renown of a name destined to live, even through the medium of sepulchral inscriptions. Nor can I easily find any one besides Verginius whose modesty in setting forth his deeds has equalled his glory in performing them. I, who enjoyed his intimate affection and approval, can personally testify that only on a single occasion in my hearing did he go so far as to relate just this one anecdote on the subject of his own actions, namely, that Cluvius had once addressed him in these terms: "You know, Verginius, the truthfulness which is due to history; accordingly, if you should read anything in my histories different from what you would wish, pray forgive me." To which he replied, "Are *you* ignorant, Cluvius, that I did what I did precisely that it might be free to you authors to write what you chose?"

Come, now, let us compare this very Frontinus in the very respect in which he seems to you more modest and restrained. He forbad a monument to be constructed; but in what words? "The expense of a monument is superfluous. My memory will endure if my life deserved it." Do you think it more modest to give out, to be read over the whole world, that one's memory will endure, than in one single spot to inscribe what you have done, in a couple of verses? Though, to be sure, it is not my object to find fault with Frontinus, but to defend Verginius; and what can be a juster defence of him, as far as you are concerned, than that which arises from a comparison with him of the person you have preferred? In my judgment, indeed, neither of them is to be blamed, since both strove

after glory with equal longing, though by a different road—one by desiring the inscription which was his due, the other by choosing rather the appearance of despising it.

(20.)

To Venator.

Your letter, assuredly, was all the more agreeable to me in proportion to its length, particularly as the whole of it was on the subject of my small productions; and I do not wonder at these being a pleasure to you, since you love everything connected with me just as you love me in person. I am, at the present moment, gathering in my vintage, a slender one, to be sure, yet a more plentiful one than I had anticipated—if "gathering in" it can be called to pluck a grape now and then, to visit the press, to taste the new wine out of the vat, to drop in on my servants from town, who are now overlooking the country ones, and who have left me to the company of my secretaries and readers.

(21.)

To Sabinianus.

Your freedman, whom you told me you were so angry with, came to me and prostrated himself, and clung to my feet as though they had been your own. There were many tears, many prayers, and even much silence on his part; in short, he convinced me of his penitence. I believe him to be truly amended, because he feels that he has sinned. You are angry, I know, and you are rightly angry, that I know too; but it is precisely when there is the most just ground for anger that clemency is entitled to the highest praise. You have loved the man, and I hope you will love him again; meanwhile it will suffice that you permit yourself to be entreated. It will be

lawful for you to be angry with him anew if he shall have deserved it; and if you are entreated now, you will do this with a better excuse. Make some allowance in view of the man's youth, in view of his tears, in view of your own goodness of heart. Do not torment him, and do not torment yourself into the bargain. For you *are* tormented, you, who are so gentle, when you are angry. I fear that I shall seem not so much to entreat as to compel, should my prayers be joined to his. I will, however, join them, and they are all the stronger and the more profuse in proportion to the sharpness and severity with which I reprimanded him, having strictly threatened him that I would never again make an application to you. So much to him, for it was proper that he should be frightened; I do not say the same to you. For possibly I may again apply to you, and again obtain my object. May it only be such as it will become me to ask for and you to vouchsafe!

(22.)

To Severus.

The illness of Passienus Paullus has caused me great anxiety, and this for many excellent reasons. He is a man of the highest worth and honour, and one who is greatly attached to me; moreover, in literature he rivals, recalls, and reproduces the ancients, particularly Propertius, from whom he is descended, whose genuine offspring he is, and whom he most resembles in the points in which the former excelled. If you take his elegiacs in hand, you will read a polished, dainty, charming book, an evident production of the household of Propertius. Recently he has turned to lyrics, in which he presents us with Horace, just as in the former kind of poetry with Propertius. You would suppose, if relationship has any power in letters, that he must be Horace's kinsman as well. He is

full of variety and flexibility. His love passages are those of a genuine lover; he mourns like one who will not be consoled; his praise is of the most benign, and his playfulness of the most humorous character; in short, he bestows the same pains on the *tout ensemble* as on the several parts. Sick in mind (no less than *he* was sick in body) on account of such a friend and such a genius, I have at length recovered him and have myself recovered.* Congratulate me, congratulate literature itself too, which has encountered as great a risk from his peril as it will obtain glory in consequence of his safety.

(23.)

To Maximus.

Often has it happened to me, when pleading, that the Centumviri, after keeping for a long while to their judicial dignity and gravity, have suddenly—as though vanquished and compelled to the act—risen from their seats in a body and applauded me. Often have I obtained from the Senate the highest glory I had aspired to. Yet never have I received greater pleasure than lately from what was told me by Cornelius Tacitus. He related how a Roman knight was sitting by him at the last Circensian games. After a conversation of a varied and learned character, the gentleman asked him, "Are you from Italy or the provinces?" He replied, "You know me, and from your reading too." Upon which the other inquired, "Are you Tacitus or Pliny?" I cannot express how delightful it is to me that our names, as though belonging to literature, and not to human beings, are thus connected with literature; that each of us is known by means of his pursuits, even to those to whom he is otherwise unknown.

Another similar occurrence took place a very few days ago. That distinguished man Fabius Rufinus was my neighbour at table, and above him was one of his towns-

* The jingle is in the original, *Tandem ille, tandem me recepi.*

men, who had come to Rome that day for the first time. Rufinus, pointing me out to him, said, "Do you see this gentleman?" and proceeded to talk at length of my literary pursuits. Said the other, "It must be Pliny." To acknowledge the truth, I enjoy a great reward from my labours. Why, if Demosthenes was rightly delighted because an old woman of Athens recognised him in these terms, "This is Demosthenes!" ought not *I* to rejoice in the celebrity of my name? And truly I do rejoice, and own that I rejoice. Nor indeed do I fear to seem too much puffed up, since it is the opinion of others about me, and not my own, that I am putting forward; and especially since this is to you, who not only do not grudge the praises bestowed on any man, but also favour those bestowed on me.

(24.)

To Sabinianus.

You have done well in taking back to your home and your heart the freedman formerly so dear to you, with my letter for his passport.* This will be a satisfaction to you. It is certainly a satisfaction to me: first, because I see you to be so tractable that even in your anger you are capable of being ruled; in the next place, because you make so much account of me as either to yield to my authority or to comply with my prayers. So I praise as well as thank you. At the same time, I admonish you, as to the future, to show yourself placable in regard to the errors of those about you, even though there should be no one by to intercede in their behalf.

(25.)

To Mamilianus.

You complain of the mass of business in the camp, and

* See Letter 21.

yet, as though you were in entire enjoyment of the most complete repose, you read my sportive effusions and trifles, you delight in them, call for them, and strongly urge me to the composition of others like them. Indeed I begin to seek, not only recreation, but even glory, from this kind of pursuit, after the favourable judgment of a man so learned, so respected, and above all so truthful, as yourself. At present, business in court, though it does not entirely occupy me, still does so to some extent. When it is concluded, I shall despatch some product of these same Muses to that kindliest bosom of yours. You will suffer my little sparrows and doves to fly among your eagles, on condition, however, of their being approved by you as well as by themselves. If the latter only, you will take care and shut them up in their cages or nests.

(26.)

To Lupercus.

I once said—aptly, as I think—of a certain orator of our epoch, who, though correct and sensible, was lacking in grandeur and ornamentation, "His only sin is that he does not sin." Indeed, an orator ought to be excited and elevated, at times even to boil over and be hurried along, and so, often to approach a precipice; for what is high and lofty generally has a chasm adjoining it. The road over a plain is safer, but at the same time humbler and lower; runners meet with more falls than crawlers, but the latter get no credit for not falling, while the former get some, even though they *do* fall. For, as in the case of certain accomplishments, so in that of eloquence—nothing commends it so much as its hazards. You see what applause dancers on a lofty tight-rope generally elicit when they seem on the point of falling; for we most admire what is most unexpected and dangerous, and, as the Greeks more strongly express it, most "dare-devilish." Hence the worth of a helmsman is by no means the same

when sailing on a quiet as when on a stormy sea. In the former case he enters the harbour without being admired by any one—without praise, without glory. But when the cordage creaks, and the mast bends, and the rudder groans, then what a great man he is, and how near to a sea-god!

Why all this? Because you seem to me to have noted certain passages in my writings as being turgid which I thought elevated, as audacious which I thought bold, as extravagant which I thought full. Now, it makes a great difference whether what you note be reprehensible or merely conspicuous. For every one has his attention attracted by what is prominent and stands out in relief; only, diligent attention is necessary for judging between what is sublime and what exceeds the bounds, what is lofty and what is extravagant. And, to quote Homer for choice, pray who can forget, whichever way they be judged, the words—

> "All around
> The mighty heaven gave out a trumpet sound;"

and

> "His spear upon a cloud reclined;"

and all that passage,

> "Nor such the shout of Ocean's wave."

But you want a tongued-balance and scales to ascertain whether these expressions are impossible and unmeaning, or on the other hand glorious and divine. Not that I am now supposing myself to have ever uttered or to be capable of uttering anything like this. I am not such a madman. But I only wish this to be understood, that the reins of eloquence should be left loose, and the flights of genius should not be restrained in the narrowest of circles.

But it will be said that the conditions of oratory are one thing and those of poetry another. Just as if M. Tullius were less daring! However, I pass him by, for indeed I do not think the subject admits of doubt. But Demosthenes himself, that pattern and model orator, pray does

he contain or restrain himself when he utters those well-known words, "Base, fawning, accursed wretches of men!" or again, "It is not with stones or bricks that I have fortified the city;" and directly afterwards, "Ought not Eubœa to have been made to flank Attica on the sea-board?" and elsewhere, "For my part, Athenians, by the Gods, I think that the man is drunk with the magnitude of his own exploits." What indeed can be more daring than that most exquisite and lengthy digression beginning with "'Tis a terrible malady"? How about this, shorter than the preceding, but equal in boldness, "Then I (yielded not) to Python in his insolence and flowing with his full tide against you"? Of the same stamp is this, "When a man is powerful through rapacity and wickedness, like this one, the first occasion, the smallest stumble, will altogether unseat and destroy him." A similar expression is "Roped off from all civic rights,"* and in the same place, "You, Aristogeiton, have surrendered all the pity that might have been felt for such deeds as these, or rather you have entirely extinguished it. Do not, therefore, come for anchorage to harbours which you have yourself blocked up and filled with piles." He had previously said, "For I fear lest some may think that you are engaged in training such of the citizens as are desirous of turning out scoundrels." And afterwards, "I see that none of these topics can offer a passage for this man, nothing but precipices and chasms and yawning pits."† It is not enough to say, "For I do not understand that our ancestors built these courts for you in order that you might plant in them such fellows as these;" he adds, "If he is a dealer and a retailer and a huckster in villainy," and a thousand things of the same kind, to pass over what Æschines called "monstrosities," not "expressions."

* Demosth. c. Aristog., p. 778. Dr. Whiston renders differently, "though debarred by all the principles of the state."

† Keil transposes this and the above quotation, but this reverses the order of the quotations in the original, and will not go with "previously" and "afterwards."

I have chanced upon what seems to contradict me. You will say that even Demosthenes is found fault with in these respects; but just see how much greater is the person criticised than the critic himself, and greater actually on account of these very things. For in other points his power, in these his sublimity shines forth. And pray did Æschines himself abstain from what he reproved in Demosthenes? "For the orator and the law should speak in unison; but when the law sends out one voice and the orator another. . . ." Elsewhere, "Since it appears that concerning everything, in the decree. . . ." Again elsewhere, "But, sitting and lying in wait for him at the hearing, drive him into lawless language," which he so much approved as to repeat, "But as in the horse-races, drive him to the same *course* in the business." Pray is this more guarded or temperate, "You are irritating the wound, . . . seizing him as a political pirate sailing through the state," and the rest of it?

I expect that some things in this very letter, as, for instance, the expression, "The rudder groans," and "Near to a sea-god," will be spitted * by you with the same marks of disapproval as those about which I write. For I am aware that while apologising for previous passages of mine I have fallen into the very things which you had set your mark to. However, I give you leave to spit them, provided only you at once appoint a day when we may treat in person both of the other passages and of these. For either you shall make me cautious,† or else I shall make you rash.

(27.)

To Paternus.

What power, what dignity, what majesty, what divinity, in short, there is in history! This I have lately, as well as

* With the *obelus*, a mark in the shape of a spit, indicating disapproval or doubt.

† *Timidum. Tumidum*, if supported by MS. authority, would perhaps be better, "Either you shall prove me to be turgid, or I shall prove you to be rash."

on numerous other occasions, experienced. A gentleman had recited a composition strongly marked by truth, and had reserved a portion of it for another day. Lo and behold the friends of a certain personage begged and entreated him not to recite the remainder. Such is the shame of listening to what they have done, on the part of the very people who are not in the least ashamed of *doing* what they blush to listen to. As for the writer, he granted their request, a thing which honour permitted him to do. The composition, however, like the deed itself, remains, and will remain, and will always be read, and that all the more because not immediately. For men are stimulated to make acquaintance with what is deferred.

(28.)

To Romanus.

After a long interval I have received your letters—three at the same time, however—all of them very choice and friendly compositions, and such as letters coming from you should be, particularly when they are so greatly desired. In one of these you impose on me a most agreeable service, that of forwarding your communications to that august lady Plotina.* They shall be forwarded. In the same letter you commend to me Popilius Artemisius. I immediately granted his request. You also intimate to me that you have got in but a moderate vintage. This complaint is common to both of us, though in such widely different parts of the world.

In your second letter you announce that you are at times dictating, and at others writing, a good deal having for its object to bring me before your mind. I thank you, and would thank you still more if you had allowed me to read the actual compositions which you are writing or dictating. And it would be fair that I should be made

* The wife of the Emperor Trajan.

acquainted with your writings, just as you have been with mine, even although they had related to some other person than myself. At the end, you promise—so soon as you shall have heard anything definite about my arrangements—that you will play the runaway to your belongings and forthwith fly off to me, who am already preparing chains for you such as you will in nowise be able to break through.

The third letter contained news that my oration for Clarius had reached you, and that it had seemed to you fuller than when you heard me speak it. It *is* fuller; for I subsequently made many additions to it. You add that you sent me another letter more carefully composed, and you ask whether I have received it. I have not received it, and I long to do so. Accordingly, send me a copy on the very first opportunity, with something added to it by way of interest, which I shall compute (can I put it lower?) at twelve per cent.

(29.)

To Rusticus.

Just as it is better to excel in any one pursuit than to do a number of things moderately well, so it is better to do a number of things moderately well, *if* you are unable to excel in any one. Observing this, I try my hand at various kinds of literature, not being sufficiently confident about any of them. So when you read this or that of mine, allow for each single composition as not standing by itself. Pray, in the case of the other arts, is the number of productions an excuse for shortcomings; and is there to be a harder law in the case of literature, in which the execution is so much more difficult? Yet why do I talk of allowance, like an ingrate? For if you receive my newest productions with the same favour as the preceding ones, I have rather to hope for praise than

to supplicate allowance. However, the latter will be sufficient for me.

(30.)

To Geminus.

You praise your friend Nonius to me—often by word of mouth, and now by letter—for being so generous towards certain people. And so do I praise him, provided he is not so towards these alone. For I will have it that the truly generous man gives to his country, his relations, his connections, his friends; I speak of his *poor* friends, not like those who choose as the objects of their donations such as can best make a return. I consider these people with their presents—all smeared with bird-lime, and furnished with a hook—to be not so much bringing forth out of their own as clutching at other people's property. Those are of a like character, who take from one what they give to another, seeking through avarice a reputation for generosity. Now, the principal thing is to be content with one's own; after that, to support, to cherish, and, as it were, to encompass in a circle of fellowship those whom one knows to be particularly in need. If your friend does all these things, he is thoroughly to be commended; if any one of them, to a smaller degree indeed, yet still to be commended, so rare is the type of even imperfect generosity. Such a passion for getting has seized on men that they seem to be taken possession of rather than to be possessors.

(31.)

To Sardus.

Since leaving you, I have been no less in your company than when with you. For I have read your book, re-perusing ever and anon those parts chiefly (I will not

deny the truth) in which you have written about me. In these indeed you have been particularly copious. How many and how varied the things you have said—things which, though about the same person, are not the same, and yet do not contradict each other. Shall I commend you, and thank you at the same time? I can do neither sufficiently, and, even if I could, should fear it might be presumptuous to commend you on account of what I had to thank you for. This only will I add, that everything in your book seemed to me the more commendable in proportion as it was agreeable to me, and the more agreeable in proportion as it was commendable.

(32.)

To Titianus.

What are you about? And what are you going to be about? For my part, I am leading the pleasantest, that is, the idlest, of lives. Hence it comes to pass that I don't like writing long letters, and like reading them—the former in my character of an exquisite, and the latter in that of an idler. For there is nothing more slothful than your exquisite, or more inquisitive than your idler.

(33.)

To Caninius.

I have fallen in with a subject which, though true, bears a close resemblance to fiction, and is worthy of your lively and elevated and thoroughly poetical genius. I fell in with it, moreover, among a variety of marvels which were being related by different guests at a dinner-party. The authority for it is a man of the highest veracity; though, by the by, what has a poet got to do with veracity? However, this particular authority is

such as you might have trusted, even if you had designed to write history.

There is in Africa a colonial town named Hippo, close to the sea. Adjoining it is a navigable lagoon, out of which flows an estuary after the manner of a river, whose waters are alternately carried to the sea or returned to the lagoon, according as they are driven back or impelled by the tide. The inhabitants of every age are strongly addicted to fishing, boating, and likewise swimming; particularly the boys, who are attracted by idleness and sport. In their eyes, it is glory and renown to swim out a long way; the victor is he who has left the shore, as well as his fellows, the furthest distance behind him. In this kind of contest, a certain lad, bolder than the rest, was getting far out to sea. Suddenly a dolphin met him, and at one time went in front of, at another followed, and then swam round him, at last took him on his back, then put him off, then took him on again, next bore the trembling lad seaward, and presently turning back to the shore, restored him to terra firma and his companions.

The report of this crept through the town; all the inhabitants flocked up and contemplated the lad himself as a kind of prodigy, they questioned him, and listened to him, and repeated his story. Next day they took possession of the shore, and gazed upon the sea and everything that looked like sea.* The boys swam, and among them the one in question, but with greater caution. Again to time came the dolphin, and again he made for the boy, who fled with his companions. The dolphin, as though inviting and recalling him, leapt out of the water, and dived and twined and untwined himself in a variety of circles. The same thing happened the next day, and a third day, and on several days, till these men, brought up to the sea, began to be ashamed of their fears. They approached and called to him jestingly; they even handled him, and he submitted to be stroked. Their boldness

* The lagoon and the estuary as well as the sea.

grew by use. But, before all others, the boy who had had the first experience of him, swam by him, jumped on his back, was carried to and fro, and, fancying he was recognised and loved by him, was himself taken with love for the dolphin. Neither of them is afraid, neither is an object of fear, the confidence of the one and the tameness of the other go on increasing. Other boys too, on the right and left, swim with their friend, cheering and exhorting him. What is also marvellous, another dolphin accompanied this one, but only in the character of a spectator and attendant, for he neither performed nor submitted to anything of the same kind; he merely led the other and escorted him back, just as the rest of the boys did with this boy. Though it seems incredible (yet it is just as true as what has preceded), this dolphin, that carried and played with boys, would often leave his element for the land, and after drying himself in the sands, would, as soon as he had grown warm, roll back into the sea. It is ascertained that Octavius Avitus the Pro-consular Legate, led by a vicious superstition, poured ointment on him after he had been attracted to the shore, and that the strangeness of the thing and the smell caused him to escape back into the deep, and that he was not seen for many days afterwards, and then languid and dull; yet soon afterwards he regained his spirits, and resumed his former friskiness and his accustomed offices. There was a confluence of all the officials of the province to see the sight, whose arrival and sojourn were exhausting the modest revenues of the town in unwonted expenses. Finally, the place itself was parting with its repose and retired character. It was decided to put to death privately the object of all this assemblage.

With what tender commiseration, with what exuberance, will you weep over and embellish and exalt this tale! There is, however, no need for your inventing or adding anything fresh to it. It will suffice if what is true suffer no diminution.

(34.)

To Tranquillus.

Relieve me of my difficulty. I hear that I read badly—poetry at least—orations, indeed, well enough, and, on that very account, poetry less well. So being about to have a recitation before some intimate friends, I am thinking of making trial of my freedman. This, too, is a mark of intimacy that I have selected a man who will not read well, though he will read better than me, provided he does not become confused, for he is as unpractised a reader as I am a poet. Now what I myself am to do all the time he is reading I know not. Should I sit wrapt and mute and like a person with nothing in hand? Or, after the fashion of some, should I accompany his delivery with mutterings and motions of the eyes and hands? But I fancy I am as bad at pantomime as at reading. Again, I say, relieve me of my difficulty, and write me back word candidly whether it be better to read execrably than to be either doing or not doing such things as these.

(35.)

To Atrius.

I have received the book you sent me, and thank you for it. I am, however, at the present time greatly occupied. Consequently I have not yet read it, though for the rest extremely anxious to do so. But I owe such respect not only to literature itself, but also to your writings, as to deem it impiety to take them in hand save with a mind quite disengaged. I strongly approve your diligence in the revision of your works. Yet there is a certain limit to this; in the first place, because too much care serves to impair rather than to emend; next, because it calls us off from newer attempts, and, while it does not

make perfect what went before, prevents us from commencing what ought to come after.

(36.)

To Fuscus.

You ask how I dispose of my day in summer-time at my place in Tuscany. I wake when I choose, generally about six o'clock, often before that, rarely later. My windows remain closed; for, thus marvellously withdrawn from all distractions, by means of the silence and the darkness, I am my own master and am left to myself; I make my eyes wait on my mind, not my mind on the eyes; and the eyes will see the same things as the mind, when they have nothing else to see. I ponder whatever I have in hand, ponder it just as if writing it out word for word and correcting it, at one time a shorter, at another a longer portion, according as it has been difficult or easy to compose or to recollect. I call for my amanuensis, and, letting in the daylight, dictate what I have put together; he goes away, is recalled, is dismissed afresh. At ten or eleven o'clock (for the time is not fixed or subject to regulation), according to the weather, I betake myself to the terrace-walk or else to the cloisters, where I meditate and dictate the sequel; then I get into my carriage. There, too, I employ myself in the same way as when walking or lying on my couch; my attention remains constant, being refreshed by the change itself. Next, I go to sleep again for a short time, then walk, and presently read a Greek or Latin oration aloud and with emphasis, not so much for the sake of my voice as my digestion, yet my voice is also strengthened at the same time. Again I walk, am anointed, exercise myself and bathe. At dinner, if taken in company with my wife or a small party, a book is read out. After dinner comes the comedian or a performer on the lyre; shortly after-

wards, I take a stroll with my attendants, in the number of whom are some persons of cultivation. In this way the evening is occupied by varied conversation, and the day, however long, is soon brought to an end.

At times some changes are made in the above disposition. For if I have been a long while on my couch, or walking, it is only after a nap and a reading that I take the air, not in a carriage, but—which takes less time, as being more rapid—on horseback. Friends drop in with their visits from the neighbouring villages, engrossing to themselves part of my day; and now and then, when I am wearied with study, these seasonable interruptions are of service to me. Occasionally I hunt, but not without my note-books, so that, if I fail in *taking* something, I may at any rate have some- to *bring home*. Some time, though not, as *they* think, enough, is given to my tenants, whose rustic grumblings enhance the pleasures of my literary pursuits, and of those occupations which smack of the city.

(37.)

To Paulinus.

It is not in your nature to exact customary and, as it were, conventional services from your intimates, against their own convenience; and, moreover, my affection for you is too steadfast to make me fear that you will take it otherwise than I could wish if I fail to attend immediately on the Kalends to see you made Consul, particularly as I am detained by the necessity of letting my farms, a business which will settle matters for several years, and in connection with which I shall have to make fresh arrangements. For during the last five years, though the tenants have had large remissions made them, their arrears have grown: hence most of them have ceased to take any pains to diminish debts which they despair of being able to pay in full. They even ravage and consume the produce, as though they began to think that if they spared it it would

not be for their own benefit.* These increasing abuses must consequently be met and remedied. The only plan for remedying them is to let the farms, not at a fixed rent, but for a share of the produce, and then to set some of my servants to supervise the work and guard the crops; and in any case, there is no fairer return than that which the soil, the climate, and the seasons bring in. This plan, it is true, requires great honesty, sharp eyes, and numerous hands. Yet the experiment must be made; and, as in the case of a disease of long standing, we must try and resort to any kind of change. You see it is no fanciful reason which prevents me from attending on the first day of your Consulship, which I shall nevertheless celebrate here, just as if I were there, with prayers and joy and congratulations.

(38.)

To Saturninus.

I *do* praise our friend Rufus, not because you begged me to do so, but because he is most worthy of praise. For I have read his book, so perfect in all points, and my love for the writer added much to its favour with me. Yet I exercised my judgment on it; nor indeed do those only exercise their judgments who read with ill-natured intent.

(39.)

To Mustius.

By the advice of the Haruspices, the temple of Ceres, which stands on my property, will have to be repaired, embellished, and enlarged. It is, to be sure, old and small, though, for all that, it is very crowded on a particular

* *I.e.*, they saw they were going to be turned out, so they sold off (as we should say), and consumed their crops as fast as they could, so as to leave nothing for the landlord.

day. For, on the Ides of September, a large assemblage is gathered there from the whole district, much business is transacted, many vows are undertaken, and many are paid, yet there is no refuge near at hand against either the rain or the sun. It seems to me, therefore, that I shall be acting in accordance with the dictates of generosity as well as of religion by constructing the temple in the handsomest style, and adding to it a colonnade—the former for the use of the goddess, the latter for the use of men. Consequently I should be obliged by your buying four columns of marble, of whatever sort you think fit; also by your buying marble for the adornment of the floor and the walls. Moreover, there will have to be either made or bought a statue of the goddess herself, because the old one which is there, and which is of wood, is in some of its parts mutilated through age. As to the colonnade, nothing occurs to me in the interval which seems to be required from your neighbourhood, unless indeed you would draw up a plan in accordance with the locality. It cannot be built round the temple, for the ground on which the temple stands is closed in on one side by a river with extremely steep banks, and on the other by a road. Beyond the road there is an extensive meadow, in which the colonnade might find space conveniently enough, opposite to the temple itself; unless you shall discover anything better, who are accustomed to overcome difficulties of locality by your art.

(40.)

To Fuscus.

You write that you were much pleased with my letter, from which you learnt how I spend my summer holidays on my Tuscan estate, and you inquire what of all this is changed in winter-time at my Laurentine villa. Nothing, except that my midday siesta is cut off, and a good deal is

taken from the night, either before sunrise or after sunset and if there is any pressing necessity for appearing in court (as there often is in winter) there is no longer place for a comedian or a lyrical performer after dinner, but I often go over again what I have dictated, and at the same time my memory is helped by this frequent revision. You now know my habits in summer and in winter. You may add to this, spring and autumn, in which, as being the intermediate seasons between summer and winter, I lose nothing of my working day, and gain a little from the night.

BOOK X.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH TRAJAN.

(1.)*

To Trajan.

Though your dutiful affection had made you desire, most august Emperor, to succeed your father at as late a period as possible, yet the immortal gods have hastened to advance your great virtues to the helm of the State, of which you had already undertaken the administration.† I pray, then, that all prosperity—in other words, all that is worthy of your epoch—may fall to your lot, and, through you, to that of the human race. I offer private as well as public aspirations for your health and spirits, most noble Emperor.

(2.)

To Trajan.

I cannot express in words, my Liege, what joy you have conferred on me, in that you have deemed me worthy of the rights belonging to the father of three children;‡ for though you have conceded this to the prayers of Julius Servianus, an admirable man, most devoted to you, yet I understand from your rescript itself that you have granted it all the more willingly, because he was asking on my account. I seem, then, to have attained the summit of my wishes, now that at the commencement of your most aus-

* In the numbering of these letters, which differs in different editions, I have followed Keil.

† Trajan had been associated with his adopted father, Nerva, in the Empire, and, on the death of the latter, acceded to the supreme rule, "the helm of the State."

‡ See ii. 13, note.

picious reign you have proved me to be an object of your especial favour. And all the greater is my longing for children, whom I wished to have even in the dismal period that is past, as you may judge from my two marriages. But the gods have decreed better, who reserved things as they were till your kindly reign. They preferred that I should become a father, rather at this time, when I should be destined to be one in security and happiness.

3 A (20).

To Trajan.

The moment, sir, I was promoted by your favour, and that of your father, to the post of Prefect of the Treasury of Saturn, I renounced all employment as an advocate (which, independently of this, I had never exercised in a promiscuous fashion), in order to devote my whole attention to the functions delegated to me. For which reason, when the Provincials chose me as their patron against Marius Priscus, I begged to be excused this office, and obtained my wish. But when subsequently the Consul-Elect gave it as his opinion that we, whose excuse had been accepted, should be urged to place ourselves at the disposal of the Senate, and to suffer our names to be thrown with others into the urn,* I deemed it most in accord with the even tenor of your reign not to resist the desire, especially such a moderate one, of the most honourable House. I hope that this compliance of mine will be thought by you to be justified, since it is my wish to make all my acts and deeds approved to your most noble disposition.

3 B (21).

Trajan to Pliny.

You have discharged the part of a good citizen and a good Senator in yielding that compliance, which was so

* That is, to suffer ourselves to be voted for by the Senate.

justly required of you, to the most honourable House. And I have full confidence that you will carry out this part in faithful accord with your undertaking.

4 (3).

Pliny to Trajan.

Your kindness, most noble Emperor, which is experienced by me to the full, prompts me to be so bold as to lie under obligation to you on behalf of my friends as well. Among these, Voconius Romanus claims for himself, I would say, even the first place, my schoolfellow and companion from early life; for which reasons I had already asked the deceased Emperor, your father, to promote him to senatorial rank. But this prayer of mine has been reserved for your grace, since the mother of Romanus had not yet completed, with due formalities, the gift of four hundred thousand sesterces,* which she had undertaken to bestow on her son in a petition addressed to your father. This she did afterwards on my admonition; for she has made over to him certain estates, and has accomplished the remaining forms which are usually required for completing a transfer. Seeing, then, that what delayed my hopes is now settled, it is not without considerable assurance that I pledge you my credit for the character of my friend Romanus, set off as it is by literary acquirements, and by his remarkable family affection, which has deserved for him this very benefaction from his mother, as well as his immediate entrance on his father's estate and his adoption by his stepfather. All this is enhanced by the splendour of his birth and of his paternal property, and I have such confidence in your kindness as to believe that these several matters will actually receive much additional recommendation from my prayers. I therefore

* About £3200. *Quadringentorum* usual reading, *quadringentics* (about *millium*, suggested by Gesner. The £320,000), seems absurd.

beg, sir, that you will put me in possession of a much-coveted subject for rejoicing, and will grant to an affection, which is, I hope, an honourable one, the power of glorying in your judgments, not as regards myself only, but my friend as well.

5 (4).

To Trajan.

Last year, sir, being tormented by a severe disease, even to the peril of my life, I engaged a doctor on the Iatraliptic system,* whose solicitude and zeal I can make an equal return for, only through favour of your kindness. Wherefore I pray you to grant him the Roman citizenship; for his status is that of a foreigner, and he was manumitted by a foreign lady. His own name is Harpocras. His patroness was Thermuthis, the wife of Theon,† who is long since dead. At the same time, I would beg you to grant naturalisation‡ to Hedia and Harmeris, the freedwomen of a most distinguished lady, Antonia Maximilla; a request which I make of you at the desire of their patroness.

6 (22).

To Trajan.

I thank you, sir, for granting, without delay, naturalisation to the freedwoman of a lady who is a friend of mine, as well as the Roman citizenship to Harpocras, my Iatraliptic doctor.§ But when I had given in the age and

* A system or cure by means of ointments.

† *Thermuthin Theonis.* This may mean either the wife or the daughter of Theon. In ii. 20, we had *Verania Pisonis*, the wife of Piso. In 11 of this book, *Stratonica Epigoni* is the daughter of Epigonus. So in Virg. Ecl., vi. 84, *Scyllam Nisi*, the daughter of Nisus.

‡ *Jus Quiritium*, and above *Civitas Romana.* The difference between these seems scarcely to be properly ascertained. See Mr. Long's article on 'Civitas' in the "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities."

§ See note, Letter 5.

fortune of the latter, as you had bidden me to do, I was informed by persons of greater experience that, inasmuch as he was an Egyptian, I ought first to have obtained for him the citizenship of Alexandria, and afterwards that of Rome. For my part, however, owing to my thinking that there was no difference between Egyptians and other foreigners, I was content simply to write to you to the effect that he had been manumitted by a foreign lady, and that his patroness was long since dead. I will not complain of this ignorance of mine, since it has been the cause of my being under more frequent obligations to you on account of the same person. I beg, therefore, in order that your favour may be lawfully enjoyed by me, that you would accord him the citizenship of Alexandria as well as of Rome. His age and fortune (that there may be no fresh delay in the way of your kindness) I have sent in to those freedmen of yours to whom you ordered me to send them.

7 (23).

Trajan to Pliny.

I have made it a rule, in accordance with the established custom of the emperors, to be cautious in bestowing the citizenship of Alexandria; but since you have already obtained that of Rome for Harpocras, your Iatraliptic doctor,* I cannot bring myself to refuse this further application of yours. You will have to inform me from what *district* he comes, that I may forward you a letter for my friend Pompeius Planta, the Prefect of Egypt.

8 (24).

To Trajan.

Your late imperial father, sir, having exhorted all citizens to the exercise of liberality, as well in an admirable discourse as by his own most noble example, I begged

* Note, Letter 5.

of him that some statues of emperors (which had been handed down to me through several successions, and which I was taking care of, just as I had received them, on some distant estates of mine) might, by his leave, be transferred to the chief town, with the addition of his own statue. This he accorded me, with the most ample expression of his approval, and I at once wrote to the Decurions * to assign me a piece of ground on which I might build a temple at my own expense. They, in honour of the work itself, offered me the choice of a situation. But I was prevented first by my own and next by your father's illness, and subsequently by the cares of the office which you and he imposed on me. *Now*, it seems to me that I can most conveniently make an excursion to the spot itself; for my month of attendance expires on the Kalends of September, and the following month has many holidays in it. I beg therefore, before all things, that you will permit me to embellish the work I am about to commence, by the addition of *your* statue; and next, in order that I may do this as soon as possible, that you will grant me a furlough. Yet it is not consistent with my straightforwardness to dissemble from your grace that you will incidentally render a great service to my private interests. For the lettings of the estates in my possession in this very district, besides that they exceed the sum of four hundred thousand sesterces,† are so far from being a matter capable of being deferred that the new tenants must immediately prune the vines. Moreover, successive bad seasons compel me to think of making remissions, and I cannot calculate these except on the spot. I shall owe then, sir, to your favour both the acceleration of my pious project and the settlement of my affairs, if on both these accounts you grant me a furlough of thirty days. Indeed I cannot fix beforehand a shorter period, since the town and the estates of which I speak are beyond the hundred and fiftieth milestone from the city.

* The Town Council, as in i. 8. † About £3200.

9 (25).

Trajan to Pliny.

You have given me many reasons, public as well as private,* for requesting a furlough. As far as I am concerned, however, your simple desire would have sufficed. For I do not doubt that you will return the moment you are able to a post which makes such calls on you as yours does. Though very sparing of honours of this description, yet I permit a statue to be erected to me in the place you wish, lest I should seem to impede the flow of your affection toward me.

10 (5).

To Trajan.

I cannot express in words, sir, the joy communicated to me by your letters, from which I learnt that you had granted in addition the citizenship of Alexandria on Harpocras, my Iatraliptic doctor,† though you had made it a rule, in accordance with the established custom of the emperors, to be cautious in bestowing it. I must now signify to you that Harpocras is from the district of Memphis, and must ask you therefore, most indulgent Emperor, to send me a letter for your friend Pompeius Planta, the Prefect of Egypt, according to promise. As I am going to meet you, my Liege, in order the sooner to enjoy the delight of your eagerly expected advent, I pray that you will permit me to go as far as possible to your encounter.

11 (6).

To Trajan.

My recent illness, sir, has placed me under an obligation to Postumius Marinus, a physician, to whom I can

* *Multas et privatas et publicas causas.* Keil's conjecture. In his text he has, *Et multas et* [*omnes*] *publicas causas.*

† Note, Letter 5.

make an equal return by your favour, if you shall comply with my prayers according to the habit of your grace.* I beg then that you will confer the citizenship on his relations—Chrysippus, the son of Mithridates, and the wife of Chrysippus, Stratonica, the daughter of Epigonus; also on the sons of the same Chrysippus, Epigonus, and Mithridates, with the proviso of their being subject to their father, and a reservation of their rights as patrons over their freedmen. At the same time I beg you to grant naturalisation to L. Satrius Abascantus, P. Cæsius Phosphorus, and Pancharias Soteris. This I ask of you with the consent of their patrons.

12 (7).

To Trajan.

I know, sir, that my prayers are implanted in that memory of yours, so retentive in the matter of kindly actions. Since, however, you have indulged me on this subject as well as on others, I must remind you and at the same time earnestly entreat you to deign to honour Accius Sura with the Prætorship whenever the post is vacant. To this hope, though otherwise a most retiring man, he is exhorted both by the splendour of his birth and the great integrity which he showed in poverty, and, above all, by the felicity of the times which invites and elevates the good consciences of your subjects to the experience of your kindness.

13 (8).

To Trajan.

Since I know, sir, that it will pertain to the attestation and approval of my character to be distinguished by the judgment of so excellent a prince, I beg that you will

* *Bonitas tua* here, as in previous letters (4 and 8), was applied as a sort of title, as "your highness" (which, like "your grace," was formerly addressed to English kings), "your excellence," &c.

deign to add to the dignity to which your favour has advanced me the post either of Augur or of Septemvir, seeing that they are vacant, that by right of my sacred office I may be able to pray to the gods for you publicly as I now pray to them in my private devotions.

14 (9).

To Trajan.

I hail with congratulations, most excellent Emperor, both on your own account and that of the State, this victory of yours, so great, so noble, so worthy of antiquity! And I pray the immortal gods that all your counsels may be followed by a like happy event, that by your lofty virtues the glory of the empire may be renewed as well as increased.

15 (26).

To Trajan.

As I am convinced, sir, that the news will be of interest to you, I beg to announce that I have sailed past the promontory of Malea and reached Ephesus, with all my suite, though retarded by contrary winds. Now I propose to make for my province, partly by coasting-boats, partly by land conveyances. For as the excessive heats are an impediment to a land journey, so in like manner the Etesian winds * oppose continuous navigation.

16 (27).

Trajan to Pliny.

You were quite right in reporting to me, my dearest Secundus. For I am greatly interested in the way you have taken for reaching your province. Your determination is prudent, too, to use ships at one time and land conveyances at another, as may be recommended by the localities.

* Annual winds, blowing from the north.

17 A (28).

To Trajan.

Just as I experienced a very healthy voyage as far as Ephesus, sir, so when I had commenced my land journey from that point, I was troubled with the most scorching heats and even slight attacks of fever, and stopped at Pergamus. Again, on changing into the coasting-boats, I was retarded by contrary winds, and did not arrive in Bithynia till somewhat later than I had hoped, that is to say, on the seventeenth of September. I cannot, however, complain of the delay, since I was fortunate enough to be able to celebrate your birthday in the province, a most auspicious circumstance. Now I am examining into the expenditure, revenues, and debts due to the commonwealth of Prusa, and the inspection itself shows me more and more the necessity of this. For many sums of money are retained, on various pretexts, by private individuals; besides, some are laid out in expenditure that is anything but legitimate.

The above, sir, I wrote directly on my arrival.

17 B.

To Trajan.

On the seventeenth of September, sir, I came to my province, which I found in that state of submission and loyalty to you which you deserve on the part of mankind. Pray, sir, consider whether you deem it necessary to send here an architect.* For it seems that no small amount may be got back from those in charge of the public constructions, if the measurements are faithfully executed. So I certainly foresee, from the accounts of the Prusenses, which I am at this moment examining.

* *Mensor.* An architect and clerk of the works.

18 (29).

Trajan to Pliny.

I wish you could have reached Bithynia without any damage to your slender frame or to your suite, and that your journey from Ephesus had resembled the sea-voyage which you had experienced up to that point. As to the day of your arrival in Bithynia, I was informed of that, dearest Secundus, by your letter. The provincials will, I trust, understand that I have had their interests in view. For you, for your part, will take care to make it plain to them that you have been selected to be sent to them as representing me.

Before all things, however, you should examine the public accounts, for that they are * in a state of confusion is quite clear. As for architects, I have scarce enough of them even for the works which are being carried on in Rome and its vicinity. But in every province persons are to be found who can be trusted; so they will not fail you, if only you choose to make diligent search for them.

19 (30).

To Trajan.

I beg, sir, you would direct me by your counsel, who am in doubt whether I ought to intrust the custody of prisoners to the public slaves (which has been the custom to this time) or to soldiers. For I fear the public slaves may not guard them with sufficient fidelity, and on the other hand that this occupation may distract † no small number of soldiers. Meanwhile, I have added a few soldiers to the public slaves. Yet I see there is a danger that this very arrangement may be a cause of negligence to both

* *Nam et eas esse vexatas.* Gierig proposes *namque.* If *et* be retained, the meaning must be "they as well as other things."

† *Distringat* here in the proper sense of "withdraw from something," *i.e.*, withdraw from their usual occupation.

parties, each party making sure that they will be able to retort upon the others the neglect common to both of them.

20 (31).

Trajan to Pliny.

There is no need, dearest Secundus, that a number of our fellow-soldiers should be transferred to the guard of prisoners. Let us persevere in the custom, which is that of your province, of guarding them by means of the public slaves. For indeed their doing this faithfully depends on your strictness and vigilance. The great fear certainly is, as you write, that by mixing up soldiers with public slaves, both parties, by trusting in each other, will be made more careless. And besides, let us not forget this, that the smallest possible number of soldiers should be called away from the standards.

21 (32).

Pliny to Trajan.

Gavius Bassus, the Prefect of the coast of Pontus, came to me most respectfully and dutifully, sir, and remained with me several days. As far as I could discern, he is an excellent man, and one worthy of your favour. I informed him of your orders, that out of the cohorts which you had been pleased to place me in command of, he must be contented with ten beneficiarii,* two horsemen and one centurion. He replied that this number would not suffice him, and that he would write to you to that effect. This was the reason why I did not think it proper at once to recall those he has with him over the number.

* This word has no English equivalent. The *beneficiarii* here seem to have been soldiers exempted from ordinary regimental duty, and forming a kind of bodyguard for the Prefect.

22 (33).

Trajan to Pliny.

Gavius Bassus has written to me too, that the number of soldiers which I had directed to be assigned to him was insufficient. That you may know my reply, I have ordered it to be appended to this letter. It makes a great difference whether necessity requires, or whether people are merely wanting to extend their commands.* For us, the public advantage is alone to be considered, and as far as possible care be taken that the soldiers be not absent from their standards.

23 (34).

To Trajan.

The people of Prusa, sir, have public baths which are both mean and old. They desire, therefore, with your kind permission, to restore them. I, however, being of opinion that new ones should be built . . . it seems to me that you might indulge them in their desire. For there will be money out of which this may be done: first, that which I have already begun to call in and claim from private individuals;† secondly, that which they themselves have been in the habit of expending on oil, and are now prepared to contribute towards the building of the baths. This is a work besides, which is demanded both by the importance of the city and the glory of your reign.

24 (35).

Trajan to Pliny.

If the construction of new baths is not likely to burden the resources of the Prusenses, we are able to indulge them

* The original is uncertain. *Multum interest res poscat an homines imperare latius velint* is the conjecture of Catanæus.

† See Letter 17 a.

in their desire, provided always that in no way are they either to be taxed for this object, or have their means impaired for the future in respect to the necessary expenditure of the State.

25 (10).

To Trajan.

Servilius Pudens, my lieutenant, sir, arrived at Nicomedia on the twenty-fourth of November, and freed me from the anxiety of a long expectation.

26 (11).

To Trajan.

Rosianus Geminus, sir, has been attached to me with the closest bonds by means of the favour you have conferred on me. For I had him for my Quæstor during my consulship, when I found him a most loyal subordinate. Since my consulship he exhibits the same respect for me, and heaps private services upon the proofs he had given of our public friendship. I beg, then, that in accordance with his worth, and in compliance with my prayers,* you will conceive a favourable opinion of one to whom, if you have any confidence in me, you will further exhibit marks of your kindness. He himself will take care, in the discharge of what you shall commit to him, to deserve still greater things. I am rendered more sparing in my praises of him by the hope that his integrity and virtue and industry are particularly known to you, not only from the offices which he has filled in the city under your eyes, but also from the fact of his having served in the army with you. The one thing which, in consequence of my affection for him, I do not seem to myself to have yet done fully enough, I must

* *Precibus meis faveas cui, etc.* If *precibus meis* be taken as the dative governed by *faveas*, a somewhat different turn will be given to the sentence.

do again and again; that is, I must beg of you, sir, that it be your pleasure with all speed to cause me to rejoice at the advancement in dignity of my Quæstor, or, in other words, through him of myself.

27 (36).

To Trajan.

Maximus, sir, your freedman and provincial agent, assures me that, besides the ten beneficiarii * which you commanded me to assign to the worthy Gemellinus, he is himself likewise in want of soldiers . . . of these in the meanwhile. . . . I thought that the number I found should be left at his service, particularly as he was going to Paphlagonia to procure corn. Moreover, for the sake of protection, I added, at his desire, two horsemen. I would beg of you to write me word what practice you would have observed for the future.

28 (37).

Trajan to Pliny.

On the present occasion, you have been quite right in furnishing my freedman Maximus with soldiers, as he was setting out to procure corn. For he, as well as they, was discharging an extraordinary office. But when he shall have returned to his pristine functions, he must be content with the two soldiers assigned him by you and the same number by Virdius Gemellinus, my agent, whose assistant he is.

29 (38).

To Trajan.

Sempronius Cælianus, a young man of remarkable merit, has sent me two slaves discovered among the re-

* Letter 21, note.

cruits. I have deferred their punishment in order to consult you, the restorer and establisher of military discipline, as to the nature of the penalty. My principal hesitation is on this account, that, though they had already pronounced the military oaths, they had not as yet been assigned to any corps.* I beg then, sir, you would write me word what course I should follow, particularly as this pertains to example.

30 (39).

Trajan to Pliny.

Sempronius Cælianus has acted in accordance with my instructions in sending to you persons concerning whom it will be necessary to make inquiry whether they seem to have merited the extreme penalty. Now it is material whether they offered themselves as volunteers, or were chosen, or again were merely presented as substitutes. If they were chosen, the recruiting officers were in fault: if they were presented as substitutes, the blame is with those who so presented them: if they came spontaneously, with a knowledge of their condition, it will be proper to punish them. Nor is it of much consequence that they have not yet been assigned to a corps. For the very day they were passed, it was their duty to tell the truth about their origin.

31 (40).

To Trajan.

Saving your majesty, sir, it behoves you to condescend to my difficulties, seeing that you have given me the right to refer to you in all matters of doubt. In many cities, and particularly Nicomedia and Nicæa, certain persons who had been condemned to the mines, or the arena, and similar kinds of punishment, exercise the office and ministry of public slaves, and even, in the capacity of

* "Sent to the colours," as we say.

public slaves, receive annual wages. On hearing this, I hesitated much and long as to what I ought to do. For, on the one hand, to remit to their punishment, after a great lapse of time, men, most of whom are now in years and who are alleged to be leading honest and discreet lives, seemed to me to be too severe: on the other hand, to retain convicts in public employments appeared to me not quite respectable. Again, I judged that for these people to be supported by the commonwealth in idleness would be useless; and that if they were not supported, there would be actual danger. Perforce, therefore, I have left the whole matter in suspense, till I had consulted you. You will perhaps inquire how it came to pass that they were exempted from the punishments to which they had been condemned, and so did I inquire, but could get no positive information to lay before you. For though the decrees, by which they had been condemned, were produced, no documents were forthcoming to prove their having been let off. There were, however, some who said that they had obtained their dismissal by their prayers at the bidding of the Proconsuls or Legates. What imparts credit to this is, that it must be supposed no one would venture on such an act without authority.

32 (41).

Trajan to Pliny.

Remember that you were sent to the province in which you now are on this very account, that there was much in it which seemed to need rectifying. Now this will be a matter specially requiring correction, that those who have been condemned to punishments should not only have been released from them, as you write, without authority, but should even be removed into the category of respectable servants. Those, then, who have been condemned within the last ten years and have not been liberated by any competent authority, it will be proper to

remit to their punishment: if there shall be found some older and aged persons who have been condemned more than ten years ago, we must distribute them in such offices as are not far from being penal. For persons of this kind are usually assigned to the baths, the cleansing of the latrines, also to working on the roads and in the streets.

33 (42).

To Trajan.

While I was making a tour through the opposite side of the province, an immense conflagration at Nicomedia consumed a number of private houses and two public edifices—though separated by a road—the Gerusia * and Temple of Isis. It spread the wider first through violence of the wind and next through the apathy of the inhabitants, who, it is quite clear, remained idle and motionless spectators of the sad calamity: and, independently of this, there was nowhere any fire-engine † for public use, no water-bucket, in short, no implement for keeping down conflagrations. As for these, indeed, in accordance with my orders already given, they will be provided. Do you, sir, consider whether you think a guild of firemen should be instituted, limited to one hundred and fifty men. I will see to it that no one shall be admitted except he be a fireman, and that they shall not use the rights accorded them for any other purpose. Nor will it be difficult to watch such a small number of men.

34 (43).

Trajan to Pliny.

It has come into your head, I see, in accordance with a common precedent, that a guild of firemen might be con-

* It is disputed whether this was a Senate-house or an Asylum for old men who had deserved well of the State.

† *Sipo* or *Sipho.* The form of this engine is shown in Rich's "Dictionary of Antiquities."

stituted among the inhabitants of Nicomedia. But I bear in mind that that province of yours, and particularly those cities, are subject to trouble from associations of this description. Whatever name, for whatever reason, we give to these reunions they will shortly become . . . and secret societies. It is better, then, to procure what may be of assistance in restraining fires, and to admonish owners of property to be themselves ready to keep them down; moreover, if the circumstances require it, to employ the concourse of spectators for the same object.

35 (44).

To Trajan.

We are at the same time, sir, renewing and acquitting our solemn vows for your safety, on which the public prosperity depends, praying the gods to grant that they may be ever thus acquitted and thus attested.

36 (45).

Trajan to Pliny.

I have learnt with pleasure, dearest Secundus, from your letter that, in company with the Provincials, you have both acquitted and renewed your vows for my health and safety to the immortal Gods.

37 (46).

To Trajan.

The inhabitants of Nicomedia, sir, spent three millions three hundred and twenty-nine thousand sesterces* on an aqueduct which was left still unfinished and was even demolished. Two millions of sesterces † have been disbursed afresh on another aqueduct. This, too, having been

* About £26,700, if the reading be correct. † About £16,000.

left off, there is need of some further outlay, that those who have mischievously thrown away such large sums may have water at any rate. I have in person found my way to a spring of great purity, from which it seems that the water ought to be conducted to the spot (as was originally attempted) by means of arches, so that it may not reach only to the flat and low-lying parts of the city. A very few arches still remain, and some may further be erected of the squared stones taken from the former construction; some portions, as it seems to me, will have to be made of brickwork, which is both handier and cheaper. But, first of all, it is necessary that a conduit-master or architect should be sent, that what has taken place before may not happen again. All I can say is, that the utility and beauty of the construction will be in all respects worthy of your reign.

38 (47).

Trajan to Pliny.

Care must be taken that water be conducted to the city of Nicomedia. I have full confidence that you will address yourself to this work with all due diligence. But, by the God of Truth, it concerns that same diligence of yours to inquire by whose fault the inhabitants of Nicomedia have thrown away so much money up to this time, and whether they have not been playing into each other's hands in commencing and then abandoning these aqueducts. Accordingly, whatever you discover on this head, bring to my knowledge.

39 (48).

To Trajan.

The theatre of Nicæa, sir, which is now in great part constructed, though yet unfinished, has absorbed, as I hear (for the accounts for the building have not yet been gone

into), more than ten millions of sesterces,* and I fear to no purpose. For it is subsiding and gaping with huge fissures, either by reason of the soil being wet and spongy, or because the stone itself is poor and friable. It certainly deserves consideration whether it ought to be completed, or abandoned, or even demolished, for the props and substructions, by which it is from time to time kept up, seem to me to be sources of expenditure rather than of strength. Many additions are promised to this theatre by private individuals, as, for instance, galleries all round, and porticoes over the spectators' seats, all of which are now delayed, owing to the stoppage of the work which must first be completed.

These same people of Nicæa have begun to rebuild the gymnasium, which was destroyed by fire before my arrival, with many more parts and on a larger scale than before, and they have already gone to some expense; as the danger is, to small advantage, for it is ill-arranged and scattered. Moreover, an architect, a rival to be sure of the one by whom the work was commenced, affirms that the walls, though two and twenty feet in thickness, are unable to support the weight imposed on them, in consequence of their being stuffed with cement in the middle and not encased in brickwork.

The people of Claudiopolis, too, are excavating, rather than building, huge baths in a low situation, with a hill actually hanging over it; and this, too, out of the moneys which the new members of their Council, added by your favour, have either already paid as their entrance-fees, or are paying in at our demand. Since, then, I fear that, in the one case, the public money, and, in the other, what is of more value than any money, the produce of your favour, may be badly invested, I am compelled to ask you, not only on account of the theatre, but also of these baths, to send an architect. He will judge whether it be more advantageous, after the outlay which has been in-

* About £80,000.

curred, to complete the works, in one way or another, as they have been begun, or to rectify what may seem to need improvement, and to transfer operations which may need to be transferred;* lest, while we are desirous of not losing what has been spent, we spend badly what will have to be further added.

40 (49).

Trajan to Pliny.

As to what is proper to be done in connection with the theatre, which has been commenced at Nicæa, you who are on the spot will be best able to consider and determine. I shall be satisfied to have intimated to me the opinion at which you arrive. The parts of the work due from private individuals, you will take care to exact from them, then only when the theatre, on account of which they have been promised, is built. These Greeklings are addicted to gymnasia; so perhaps the people of Nicæa have set about building theirs with too much zest; they must, however, be content with one which shall suffice for their necessities.

As to the advice to be given to the people of Claudiopolis, in connection with their baths (which they have commenced in what you describe as an unsuitable spot), it is for you to determine. You cannot be short of architects. There is no province which does not contain experienced and ingenious men of this kind; provided you do not suppose it is shorter to send them from Rome, when they are actually in the habit of coming to us from Greece.

* This seems to refer to the baths. See *ante*.

41 (50).

To Trajan.

When I contemplate the grandeur of your fortunes and of your mind, it seems to me in the highest degree appropriate to designate to you such works as shall be worthy no less of your immortality than of your glory, as shall be marked by their utility no less than by their excellence. On the borders of the Nicomedian territory there is an extensive lake, by means of which marble, agricultural produce, firewood, and building materials are conveyed, at small cost and labour, in ships to a road, and from that point with much labour, and still more expense, in waggons to the sea. . . . This work demands many hands, but these, to be sure, are not wanting, for there is a large supply of men in the country parts, and a still larger in the city, and we may confidently expect that all of them will with much alacrity engage in a work which will be of advantage to all. It remains for you, if you shall see fit, to send us a surveyor, or else an architect, who shall carefully examine whether the lake is higher than the sea—the experts in these parts contending that it *is* higher by forty cubits. I find that a trench was cut in this identical direction by the king;* but it is uncertain whether this was done for the purpose of collecting the moisture from the surrounding country, or in order to turn the lake into the river. For it is not completed. And this, too, is doubtful, whether the king was arrested by death, or whether he despaired of carrying through the work. But this very circumstance (for you will suffer me to be ambitious on account of your glory) incites and stimulates me to wish that *you* may complete that which kings have only commenced.

* *A rege.* Who is meant is uncertain. Some suppose Mithridates. The "river" which is next alluded to may probably have been mentioned in the portion of the letter which seems to be wanting. See above. *Cf.* Letter 61.

42 (51).

Trajan to Pliny.

The lake which you mention is such as may possibly induce in us the desire to open it out to the sea. But a careful examination is evidently necessary, lest if its waters be sent down to the sea, they should be entirely drained off, and certainly as to the quantity of its waters and the source whence it derives them. You can ask for a surveyor from Calpurnius Macer, and I will send you from here some person experienced in this kind of work.

43 (52).

To Trajan.

On my calling for an account of the expenditure of the community of Byzantium (which has been very great), I learnt, sir, that an envoy is sent to pay his respects to you every year, bearer of a popular decree to that effect, and that twelve thousand sesterces* are given him. So, bearing in mind your course of action, I deemed it right to keep back the envoy and to send on the decree, that at the same time the expense might be lightened and a public duty fulfilled. The same city was debited with three thousand sesterces,† which, under the head of travelling expenses, were given annually to the envoy who went to pay his respects publicly to the Governor of Mœsia. These sums, I considered, ought for the future to be cut down. I beg, sir, that you would write me word what you think, and so deign either to confirm my judgment or to correct my mistake.

44 (53).

Trajan to Pliny.

You have acted admirably, dearest Secundus, in remitting to the inhabitants of Byzantium those twelve thousand

* About £96. † About £24.

sesterces which were spent on an envoy for the purpose of paying me their respects . . . although the decree alone shall have been sent through you. The Governor of Mœsia, too, will forgive them if they show their regard for him in a less expensive way.

45 (54).

To Trajan.

With regard to diplomas,* sir, the date of which has expired, I would beg you to write whether you wish them to be regarded at all, and if so for how long? This will free me from doubt. For I fear that through ignorance I may make a mistake one way or the other, and either confirm what is unlawful or obstruct what is necessary.

46 (55).

Trajan to Pliny.

Diplomas, the date of which has expired, ought not to be in force. Consequently I make it one of my first rules to send new diplomas to all the provinces before they can possibly be required.

47 (56).

To Trajan.

Upon my desiring, sir, to be made acquainted with the debts due to the State of Apamea, and its income and expenditure, I was told in reply that, while every one was anxious that the accounts of the colony should be inspected by me, yet that they never *had* been inspected by any of the pro-consuls, since they were in possession of a prerogative and a very ancient usage of administering the public

* *Diplomata*, letters of recommendation to persons travelling, something like modern passports. This is probably at least the sense here, though there were diplomata of various kinds, and we cannot be sure as to what Pliny refers.

affairs at their own discretion. I insisted upon all that they said and recited being included in a memorial, which I have sent to you just as I received it, though perceiving that much of its contents does not relate to the subject of inquiry. I beg you to deign to instruct me as to the course you deem it right for me to follow. For I fear lest I should seem either to have exceeded or not to have duly fulfilled the functions of my office.

48 (57).

Trajan to Pliny.

The memorial of the Apameni, which you have joined to your letter, has freed me from the necessity of carefully examining the reasons on the strength of which they wish it to appear that the Proconsuls who have governed their province have abstained from inspecting their accounts, since they have not opposed *your* inspecting them. Their probity should therefore be rewarded, and they should at once be told that in inspecting the accounts you will be acting by my orders, without prejudice to the prerogatives they enjoy.

49 (58).

To Trajan.

Before my arrival, sir, the inhabitants of Nicomedia had begun to add a new Forum to their old one, in a corner of which is a temple of the great mother of the gods,* which must be either rebuilt or removed, particularly as it is much lower than the construction which is at the present moment rising. When I inquired whether the temple had been in any way formally consecrated, I learnt that the mode of dedication here differs from ours. Consider, then, sir, whether you think that a temple which has not been formally consecrated can be

* Cybele.

removed without prejudice to religion. In other respects, it would be most convenient to do so—if religion is no obstacle.

50 (59).

Trajan to Pliny.

You may, dearest Secundus, without religious scruples —if the situation of the place seems to require it—remove the temple of the mother of the gods to one that is better accommodated to it. Nor need you be troubled about finding no form of dedication, since the soil of a foreign city does not admit of the kind of dedication which takes place under our laws.

51 (12).

To Trajan.

It is difficult, sir, to express in words the great pleasure which I felt at your consenting, at the request of my mother-in-law and myself, to transfer her relative Cælius Clemens to this province. For hence I thoroughly understand the measure of your kindness, since I experience such full favour, with all my kindred—a favour I dare not attempt to make a like return for, even though I had it entirely in my power. So I fly to prayers, and entreat the gods that I may not be deemed unworthy of those things which you are so assiduous in conferring on me.

52 (60).

To Trajan.

We have celebrated, sir, the day on which you saved the Empire by taking it on yourself, with all the joy which you merit: and we prayed the gods to preserve you in life and prosperity to the human race whose safeguard and security depends on your welfare. We set the example to the troops, too, in swearing allegiance in the

customary way, which the provincials did in the same form, and with emulous loyalty.

53 (61).

Trajan to Pliny.

I have learnt with pleasure from your letter, my dearest Secundus, how religiously and joyfully the troops, together with the provincials, followed you in celebrating the day of my accession.

54 (62).

To Trajan.

The public moneys, sir, are, through your forethought and our ministry, either already collected or in the course of collection; and I fear they will lie idle. For there are no opportunities, or else very rare ones, of buying land: nor are persons to be found who are willing to be debtors to the state, particularly at twelve per cent., the rate at which they can borrow from private individuals. Consider then, sir, whether you think that the rate of interest should be lowered, and by these means eligible borrowers be attracted, and if even thus such persons are not to be found, whether the money should be distributed among the Decurions,* on condition of their furnishing proper security to the state; which arrangement—though they may not like it, and may be for declining it—would be made less burdensome, in consequence of a lower rate of interest having been fixed.

55 (63).

Trajan to Pliny.

I myself can perceive no other remedy, my dearest Secundus, than that the rate of interest should be lowered, in order to facilitate the investment of the public moneys.

* The town-council.

You yourself must fix the limit in accordance with the number of those who shall be ready to borrow. To compel persons against their will to take what they themselves may perhaps find no employment for—this is a course which does not accord with the equity of my reign.

56 (64).

To Trajan.

I return you, sir, the deepest thanks for deigning, amidst your great occupations, to direct me also as to those matters on which I have consulted you, and I would beg you to do this on the present occasion as well. For a person has come to me and informed me that his adversaries, though banished for three years by that distinguished man Servilius Calvus, still remain in the province. They, on the other hand, have affirmed that they were reinstated by the same governor, and have recited his edict to that effect. For this reason, I have thought it necessary to refer the matter in its entirety to you. For though it was provided in your mandates that I was not to reinstate persons banished by a former governor, or by myself, yet nothing was included in them on the subject of those who had been both banished *and* reinstated by a former governor. Therefore you, sir, had to be consulted as to what practice you would have me follow, as also, by Hercules, with regard to those who, though banished for life and never reinstated, are caught in the province. For this particular case too has fallen under my cognisance. A person was brought before me who was banished for life by Julius Bassus, the proconsul. Knowing that the acts of Bassus had been rescinded, and that the Senate had given to all those who had been the subjects of any of his decisions the right of trying the matter afresh, that is during a period of two years, I inquired of this person whom Bassus had banished, whether he had gone to the

proconsul and instructed him. He said he had not. Hence I was brought to consult you as to whether he should be remitted to his punishment or whether you think that some still heavier penalty, and if so what particular one, should be constituted for him and for those, if such there happen to be, who may be found in a like case. I have appended to this letter the decree of Calvus and the edict, also the decree of Bassus.

57 (65.)

Trajan to Pliny.

As to the determination to be arrived at in the case of those persons who, having been banished for three years by P. Servilius Calvus, the proconsul, were soon afterwards reinstated by an edict of the same proconsul, and have remained in the province, I will shortly write you in reply, when I shall have inquired of Calvus himself his reasons for thus acting. The man who was banished for life by Julius Bassus—inasmuch as he had the power of taking action for the space of two years, in case he thought himself unjustly banished, and yet failed to do this, and moreover persisted in tarrying in the province—must be sent a prisoner to my Prætorian prefects. For it is not enough that he should be remitted to his former punishment, after evading it by his contumacy.

58 (66).

To Trajan.

On my summoning the judges, sir, when opening my provincial court, Flavius Archippus began to plead excuse on the ground of being a philosopher. It was said by some that instead of being freed from the obligation of acting as judge, he ought to be removed altogether from the judicial list, and remitted to the punishment which he had escaped by breaking his chains. A decision of Velius

Paulus, the proconsul, was cited, proving Archippus to have been condemned to the mines on a charge of forgery. He brought forward nothing to show that he had been reinstated; he alleged, however, in favour of his reinstatement, a memorial presented by himself to Domitian, and letters of the latter in which he was honourably mentioned, as also as a decree of the Prusenses. To these he added a letter written to him by yourself too, and an edict and a letter of your father confirming the favours granted by Domitian. Consequently, though such crimes were laid to the charge of this man, I deemed that nothing should be decreed till I had consulted you on a point which seemed worthy of being settled by you. I have added to this letter what was cited on both sides.

The Epistle of Domitian to Terentius Maximus.

Flavius Archippus, the philosopher, has begged me to grant him, in the neighbourhood of Prusa, his native place, some land sufficiently productive to maintain his family by its revenue. I will that this be accorded him. The whole sum expended you will charge to my liberality.

Of the same to L. Appius Maximus.

I desire to recommend to you, my dear Maximus, Archippus the philosopher, a worthy man, and one whose conduct answers to his profession; and that you show him the full measure of your kindness in such things as he shall ask of you in moderation.

Edict of Nerva.

There are some things, Quirites, without doubt, which the felicity of these times spontaneously enjoins; nor is the goodness of a prince to be tested, in matters in which it is sufficient that it be understood: since the assurance, needing no reminder, of my subjects, is a warrant to them, that I have preferred the general security to my own

repose, in order to confer many new favours, as well as to maintain those conceded before my time. In order, however, that no uncertainty may be introduced into the public joy, either through the diffidence of those who have obtained favours or through the recollection of him who granted them, I have deemed it at the same time a necessity and a pleasure, with the view of meeting all suspicions, to announce my kindly intentions. I am unwilling any one should suppose that what he has obtained either privately or publicly from another prince will be annulled by me, though it were only with the view of his owing it to me rather than another. All these things are hereby settled and confirmed: nor are fresh prayers necessary to complete the enjoyment of any one on whom the imperial favour has smiled. Let my subjects suffer me to find leisure for fresh benefits, and let them know that those things only are to be asked for which they do not possess.

Letter of the same to Tullius Justus.

Inasmuch as all public ordinances which have received a commencement and completion in former reigns are to be observed, regard must also be paid to the letters of Domitian.

59 (67).

To Trajan.

Flavius Archippus has conjured me, "by your health and immortality," to send you the memorial he has handed to me. I have thought it right to comply with a request so couched, on condition, however, of my informing the prosecutrix that I was going to send it. I got a memorial from her as well, and have appended it to these letters, that having, as it were, heard both sides, you might be in a better condition to judge what you think should be determined.

60 (68).

Trajan to Pliny.

Domitian, to be sure, may have been ignorant of the situation of Archippus, when he wrote so much tending to his honour. But it is more in accordance with my nature to suppose that the intervention of the Emperor was actually for the purpose of relieving his situation, especially as such an honour as that of a statue was so often decreed to him by persons who were not ignorant of the sentence passed on him by the Proconsul Paulus. All this, however, my dearest Secundus, must not go so far as to make you think you should be the slower to hear, in case anything in the shape of a fresh charge is brought against him. I have read the memorials of Furia Prima, the prosecutrix, also those of Archippus himself, which you appended to your former letters.

61 (69).

To Trajan.

You, sir, to be sure, with your great forethought, are apprehensive that if the lake * be made to communicate with the river and so with the sea, it may be dried up. I, however, who am on the spot, fancy I have discovered a way of obviating this danger. The lake may be brought by means of a canal up to the river, and yet not be discharged into it, but be at the same time retained and kept separate from it, by leaving, as it were, a margin between the two. By this means we shall obtain as a result, that while the lake shall not seem to be emptied by being poured into the river, yet it will be as good as poured into it. For over this very small intermediate space it will be easy to transport to the river the cargoes brought to that point by means of the canal. The work will be so executed if necessity compels, though I hope it will not

* See Letter 41 of this book.

compel. For not only is the lake sufficiently high of itself, but also at the present moment it discharges a river on the opposite side, which may be dammed off from that direction, and diverted as we wish, and so, without any loss to the lake, be made to give all the water which it now carries. Moreover, on the ground along which the canal will have to be made, rivulets occur which, if they are carefully collected, will add to what the lake gives us. If, again, it be decided to prolong the canal, to dig it narrower, and to bring it on a level with the sea, and so to make it communicate not with the river but with the sea itself, the counter-pressure of the sea will preserve and keep back whatever comes from the lake. If the nature of the locality allowed of nothing of this kind, yet it would be easy to check the rapidity of the stream by means of sluices. However, these and other matters will be inquired into and investigated with much more sagacity by the surveyor whom you, sir, ought clearly to send according to promise. For the matter is one worthy of your greatness and your attention. I meanwhile have written to that distinguished man, Calpurnius Macer, at your suggestion, to send me as competent a surveyor as possible.

62 (70).

Trajan to Pliny.

It is clear, my dearest Secundus, that you have been wanting neither in prudence nor in diligence in the matter of the lake of which you speak: since you have provided so many expedients, by means of which not only will there be no danger of its being exhausted, but also it will be made more serviceable to us. Choose, then, whatever the circumstances themselves shall particularly recommend. I take it that Calpurnius Macer will arrange to furnish you with a surveyor, nor are those provinces deficient in professionals of this kind.

63 (13).

To Trajan.

Lycormas, your freedman, has written me word, sir, that if any embassy came here from Bosphorus, on its way to Rome, it should be detained till his arrival. Now no embassy has as yet come, at any rate to the city in which I am: but a courier has come from the king of Sarmatia: and availing myself of the opportunity which chance offered, I have thought it right to send him on in company with the courier who preceded Lycormas, that you might be informed at the same time, by the letters of Lycormas and those of the king, of matters which perhaps ought to come to your knowledge at one and the same time.

64 (14).

To Trajan.

The king of Sarmatia has written me word that there are some matters on which you ought to be informed as soon as possible. For this reason I have helped to hasten the courier, whom he has sent to you with despatches, by the grant of a passport.

65 (71).

To Trajan.

A great question, sir, and one affecting the whole province, is that of the status and keep of those who are called "foundlings." In this matter, after hearing the constitutions of the Emperors, as I could find nothing in them either of a particular or a general kind applicable to the Bithynians, I have judged it proper to consult you as to the course you would have pursued: nor, indeed, did I think that in a matter demanding your supreme judgment I could possibly be satisfied with a mere pre-

cedent. An edict was, however, cited to me, which was said to be one by the Emperor Augustus relating to Annia. Letters were also cited of the Emperor Vespasian to the Lacedæmonians, of the Emperor Titus to the same, and of Domitian to the proconsuls Avidius Nigrinus and Armenius Brocchus, also to the Lacedæmonians. These I have not sent to you, because they seemed to me to be mere rough drafts and some of them of doubtful authenticity, and because I believe the genuine and corrected letters to be among your archives.

66 (72).

Trajan to Pliny.

This question—relating to those who, born free, have been exposed, and have been subsequently taken up by certain parties and reared in servitude—has been often treated of; yet there is nothing to be found in the commentaries of the Emperors who have preceded me, in the shape of a settled rule for all the provinces. There are, to be sure, letters of Domitian to Avidius Nigrinus and Armenius Brocchus, which, perhaps, ought to be had in regard, but between those provinces which are the subjects of his rescript . . . among which is Bithynia. I think, therefore, that an adjudication of freedom should not be refused to those who claim their liberty on these grounds,* and, moreover, that this same liberty does not need to be purchased at the price of their keep.

67 (15).

To Trajan.

The ambassador of the king of Sarmatia having, of his own choice, halted a couple of days at Nicæa, where he found me, I judged, sir, that he ought not to be detained longer: first, because it was still uncertain when your

* *Ex ejusmodi causa*, or "under these circumstances," "in cases of this kind," as in Letter 68.

freedman Lycormas would come, and next because I was myself starting for the other side of the province where the requirements of my office called me. I have thought these circumstances should be brought to your knowledge, because I recently wrote to you that Lycormas had asked me to detain till his arrival any embassy that might come from Bosphorus. No satisfactory reason occurs to me for doing this any longer, particularly as the letters of Lycormas (which I was unwilling, as I have before told you, to detain) seemed likely to precede this ambassador by some days.

68 (73).

To Trajan.

Certain parties have petitioned me to allow them, in accordance with the precedents of former governors, to transfer the ashes of their relations, either on account of the injuries done by time, or the encroachments of the river, or on a variety of other similar grounds. Knowing that at Rome, in cases of this kind, application is wont to be made to the Pontifical College, I have thought it right to consult you, sir, who are Pontifex Maximus, as to what course you would have me follow.

69 (74).

Trajan to Pliny.

It would be hard to inflict on the provincials the necessity of applying to the Pontifices, if they are desirous, on any good grounds, of transferring the ashes of their relatives from the place where these lie to some other. You should, therefore, rather follow the precedents of those who have governed that province: and give the permission, or refuse it in each case, according to the merits.

70 (75).

To Trajan.

On my inquiring, sir, whereabouts in Prusa the baths which you have accorded could be built, I pitched upon a spot where there was once, I am told, a fine house, now an unsightly ruin. In this way we shall insure that the extremely filthy aspect of the city will be improved, and even that the city itself will be enlarged, without any buildings being pulled down, but such as are crumbling with age being rebuilt on a larger and improved scale.

The circumstances of this house, however, are as follows. Claudius Polyænus left it by will to Claudius Cæsar, with the injunction that a temple should be raised to him in the peristyle, and the rest of the house should be let. For some time the commonwealth derived a revenue from it: afterwards, by degrees, partly through plunder, partly through neglect, the whole house has tumbled to pieces, peristyle included: and indeed by this time hardly anything of it remains but the ground on which it stood. If you, sir, would either make a present of this ground to the state, or order it to be sold, the act would be received as a great boon, on account of the eligibility of the site. For my part, if you will allow me, I design to place the baths where the open court was, and to enclose the place where the buildings were with a vestibule and colonnades to be dedicated to you, the benefactor to whom will be owing this handsome construction, worthy of your name. I have forwarded you a copy, though it is an imperfect one, of the will. From this you will see that Polyænus left many things for the adornment of this same house, which have disappeared with the house itself. However, I will make as diligent inquiry as possible for them.

71 (76).

Trajan to Pliny.

The inhabitants of Prusa are permitted to use the courtyard with the ruined house, which you tell me is vacant, for the construction of their baths. There is one thing, however, which you have not made sufficiently clear: whether the temple to Claudius was erected in the peristyle. For if it *was* erected, then, although it may have fallen down, the ground on which it stood is sacred.

72 (77).

To Trajan.

Having been applied to by certain parties to take personal cognisance of claims of freedom and the restoration of birthrights,* in accordance with the rescript of Domitian written to Minucius Rufus, and the precedents set by proconsuls, I referred to the acts of the Senate pertaining to this kind of cause. It speaks of those provinces only which are governed by proconsuls. Consequently I have deferred the matter as it stands till you, sir, shall have advised what course you would have me follow.

73 (78).

Trajan to Pliny.

When you have sent me the act of the Senate which has caused you to hesitate, I shall judge whether you ought to take cognisance of claims of freedom and the restoration of birthrights.

* *Restituendis natalibus.* The putting of persons, born slaves, and afterwards manumitted, into the same position as if they were born free. This, it would seem, could only be done by the Emperor, as a general rule.

74 (16).

To Trajan.

Appuleius, sir, an officer quartered at Nicomedia, has written to me of a certain person named Callidromus, who having been detained by Maximus and Dionysius, two bakers, in whose service he had engaged himself, fled for refuge to your statue. Being brought before the magistrates, he declared that he had formerly been in the service of Laberius Maximus, that he was made prisoner by Susagus in Mœsia, and sent by Decebalus as a present to Pacorus, the king of Parthia. In his service he remained for a number of years, and subsequently made his escape, and so came to Nicomedia. I had him brought before me, and, on his repeating the same story, have thought it right to send him to you. This I have delayed doing for a short time, while I searched for a gem which he declared had been stolen from him, and which contained the portrait of Pacorus in his insignia. For I wished to send this to you at the same time, if it could have been found, as I have sent a nugget which he says he brought from a mine in Parthia. It is sealed up with my ring, the device of which is a chariot with four horses.

75 (79).

To Trajan.

Julius Largus of Pontus, sir, whom I had never seen or even heard of—he must, to be sure, have confided in your judgment*—has made me, as it were, the steward and minister of his affection towards you. For he has requested me in his will to enter upon his estate, and after taking for myself a sum of fifty thousand sesterces † to bestow the

* He must have felt sure that you would have chosen none other than an honourable man for governor—a delicate mode of flattering Trajan.

† About £400.

whole of the residue on the cities of Heraclea and Tios; with the proviso that it should be at my option to decide whether buildings should be erected, to be consecrated in honour of you, or quinquennial games should be instituted, to be called the games of Trajan. I have thought it right to bring this to your knowledge, chiefly that you might consider what choice I ought to make.

76 (80).

Trajan to Pliny.

Julius Largus has selected you, for your good faith, as though he had known you well. You must yourself, then, consider what may best serve for perpetuating his memory, in accordance with the conditions of each locality: and what you shall deem most suitable, that do.

77 (81).

To Trajan.

You have acted most providently, sir, in ordering that distinguished man Calpurnius Macer to send a legionary centurion to Byzantium. Consider whether you are of opinion that a similar privilege might be conferred on the inhabitants of Juliopolis. Their city, being but a very small one, has very great burdens to bear: and is exposed to oppressions which are all the heavier in proportion to its weakness. Moreover, whatever you accord to the people of Juliopolis will be of service to the whole province. For they are at the entrance of Bithynia, and give passage to most of those who resort to it.

78 (82).

Trajan to Pliny.

The condition of the city of Byzantium is such, owing to the great confluence of travellers into it from all parts,

that, in accordance with the usage of previous times, I considered it proper to provide for its repute by a Legionary Centurion's guard. If we shall think fit to assist the people of Juliopolis in the same way, we shall be burdening ourselves with a precedent. A number of others, and all the more so, the weaker they are, will be making the same request. I have such confidence in your diligence as to believe that you will use every exertion to prevent their being exposed to acts of oppression. If, however, any persons shall behave themselves contrary to my injunctions, let them be at once imprisoned: or if their offences are too great to be adequately punished in a summary way;* in case they are soldiers, inform their generals of what you have discovered: in case they are coming to Rome, write to me.

79 (83).

To Trajan.

It was provided, sir, by a law of Pompey's given to the Bithynians, that no person should hold a public office, or sit in the Senate, under the age of thirty years. The same law included a provision that those who had been admitted to public offices should sit in the Senate. After this came an edict of the Emperor Augustus, allowing younger men to take office, the limit being two and twenty years. The question is, then, whether a man under thirty years of age, who has held office can be chosen by the Censors as a senator? And if he can, whether such also as have not held it, can, by a like interpretation, be chosen senators from the same age at which it is allowed them to hold an office? a thing which, besides† has not only been often done up to the present time, but is even said to be necessary, since it is somewhat better that the sons of men of position should be admitted into the Senate rather

* Literally "on the spot." equivalent to the French "d'ail-
† *Alioqui.* Here the word seems leurs."

than plebeians. Having been asked for my opinion by the Censors elect, I thought that those under thirty years of age who had held office might be chosen senators, in accordance both with the edict of Augustus and the law of Pompey: inasmuch as Augustus had allowed persons under thirty to hold office, and the law enacted that he who had held office should be a senator. As to such as had not held it, although of the same age as those who had been allowed to hold it, I hesitated. Hence I have been brought to consult you, sir, as to what course you would have followed. I have appended to this edict the heads of the law, also the edict of Augustus.

80 (84).

Trajan to Pliny.

I agree with you, dearest Secundus, in your interpretation, that Pompey's law has been amended by the Emperor Augustus's edict so far as this, that persons can be admitted to public offices, who are not under twenty-two years of age, and that such as had been so admitted should find their way into the Senate of each commonwealth. But, where no office has been entered on, I do not think that those who are under thirty years are capable of being chosen senators in their several localities, on the ground that they are eligible for such offices.

81 (85).

To Trajan.

While I was employed in public business in my own apartments at Prusa under Mount Olympus, sir, being about to leave the same day, Asclepiades, a magistrate, announced that an appeal had been lodged with me by Claudius Eumolpus. Coccianus Dion having moved in the Council that a construction which he had had the charge of should be assigned to the city, thereupon

Eumolpus, backed by Flavius Archippus, declared that Dion should be required to furnish the accounts relating to the construction before it was handed over to the city, on the ground of his not having acted as he ought to have done. He added, moreover, that in this same construction there were placed, together with your statue, the corpses of interred persons—those of Dion's wife and son; and he demanded that I should try the matter publicly.* Upon my telling him that I would immediately do this, and would adjourn my departure accordingly, he asked me to grant a longer interval for the purpose of getting up the case, and to try it in some other city. I replied that I would hear it at Nicæa. When I had taken my seat there for the purpose of trying it, the same Eumolpus, on the plea of not yet being sufficiently prepared, began by asking for an adjournment: Dion, on the other hand, demanded that it should be heard. A great deal was said on both sides, and on the merits of the case as well. For my part, being of opinion that an adjournment should be granted, and counsel taken of you in a matter likely to form a precedent, I told each side to give in a written statement of their respective demands, for I desired that you should know what was put forward, above all things, in the very words of the parties themselves. Dion said he would give this in, and Eumolpus replied that he would include in a written statement his claims on behalf of the commonwealth; but that as regarded the interred bodies, he was not the accuser, but only the advocate of Flavius Archippus, whose instructions he had obeyed. Archippus, however, who stood by Eumolpus here as at Prusa, said that he would hand in a statement. Such being the case, neither Eumolpus nor Archippus, though waited for for many days, have as yet sent me their statements. Dion has sent his, which I have joined to this letter. I myself went to the spot, and saw that your statue was added to

* To place the statute of an emperor close to graves would be an act liable to prosecution.

the library. The edifice, however, where the son and wife of Dion are said to be buried is situated in the courtyard, which is enclosed by a colonnade. I pray, sir, that you would deign to direct me, especially in such a kind of investigation as this, as to which, moreover, great interest is felt. Indeed this must be the case in a matter where the charge is at the same time acknowledged and defended by precedents.

82 (86).

Trajan to Pliny.

You might have been free from doubt, dearest Secundus, as to the matter on which you have thought it right to consult me, since you perfectly well knew my settled purpose not to attract awe to my name through fear or the terrors of men, or charges of treason. Leaving out of the question, then, an inquiry which I should not entertain even if it were supported by precedents, let the entire accounts of the construction carried out under the supervision of Coccianus Dion be investigated, since this is a course demanded by the interests of the city, and which Dion neither can oppose nor is entitled to oppose.

83 (87).

To Trajan.

The Nicæans have publicly entreated me, sir, by what to me both are and ought to be most sacred, that is by your wellbeing and immortal fame, that I would transmit their prayers to you. Not thinking it right to refuse the request, I have appended to this letter a memorial received from them.

84 (88).

Trajan to Pliny.

It will be your duty to entertain the affair of the Nicæans, who affirm that the Emperor Augustus granted

their city the right to claim the property of such of its citizens as died intestate. You will have to convoke all persons concerned in this business, summoning to your assistance Virbius Gemellinus and Epimachus, my freedman, the imperial agents, in order that, having likewise duly weighed what is urged on the opposite side, you may together determine as you shall judge best.

85 (17).

To Trajan.

Having found Maximus, your freedman and agent, sir, throughout the whole time that we have been together, to be an upright, active, and diligent man, one who is devoted to your interests, and at the same time most observant of discipline, I gladly give my testimony in his favour with that fidelity which I owe you.

86 A (18).

To Trajan.

Having found Gavius Bassus, sir, the prefect of the Pontic coast, to be a man of integrity, uprightness, and industry, and with all this most respectful towards myself, I tender my wishes and suffrages on his behalf with that fidelity which I owe you.

86 B (18).

To Trajan.

. . . Trained by having served under your command, to whose schooling he owes it that he is worthy of your favour. Both soldiers and civilians, who have had thorough experience of his impartiality and affability, have vied with each other in conveying to me their testimony, private as well as public, on his behalf. This I bring to your notice with that fidelity which I owe you.

87 (19).

To Trajan.

Nymphidius Lupus, sir, a former Primipilus,* was my comrade in arms at the time when I myself was Tribune and he was Præfect. From that time I began to cherish him closely. Subsequently my regard for him grew from the very length of our mutual friendship. On the strength of this, I have laid violent hands on his repose, and have forced him to assist me with his counsel in Bithynia. This he has not only already done, but will continue to do in the most friendly way, and laying aside all considerations of ease and age. For these reasons I reckon his belongings among my own, and particularly his son Nymphidius Lupus, a young man of probity and energy, one in every way worthy of his distinguished father, and who will do credit to your indulgent notice of him. This indeed you may learn from the first proofs he has given as Præfect of a cohort, in which capacity he gained the highest character from those eminent men, Julius Ferox and Fuscus Salinator. My joy and self-congratulation will be satisfied by the advancement of the son.

88 (89).

To Trajan.

I pray, sir, that you may have the happiest of birthdays, and many others like it, and that in strength and security you may ever be adding by fresh achievements to that glory flourishing with immortal renown, which you derive from your virtues.

* The *Primipilus* was a centurion of high rank, who carried the eagle of the legion. Those who had served the office were styled *Primipilares*. Here Pliny probably wishes to emphasise the fact that Nymphidius Lupus had filled the responsible office of Primipilus before rising to the higher grade of *Præfectus*.

89 (90).

Trajan to Pliny.

I acknowledge with thanks, dearest Secundus, the prayers you offer that I may have many birthdays, and very happy ones, with our country in a flourishing condition.

90 (91).

To Trajan.

The inhabitants of Sinope, sir, are short of water, which it seems might be brought in, of good quality and in abundance, from a distance of sixteen miles. There is, however, close upon the source, that is a little more than a mile off, a suspicious and boggy spot: this I have meanwhile ordered to be examined, at a small expense, to see whether it is capable of receiving and supporting an aqueduct. We shall not want for money, which I have taken care to collect, provided you, sir, accord this kind of construction in view of the salubrity and attractiveness of a very thirsty town.

91 (92).

Trajan to Pliny.

As you have begun, dearest Secundus, so go on carefully to investigate whether the particular spot, which is suspicious to you, can bear such a work as an aqueduct. For I do not doubt that water should be brought into the town of Sinope, provided the town itself can effect this at its own charge only: since such a result would add much both to its salubrity and to its agreeableness.

92 (93).

To Trajan.

The free and confederate city of the Amiseni, by favour of your indulgence, enjoys its own laws. A petition was

handed to me there relating to "Charitable Collections," which I have appended to this letter, that you, sir, might judge what things (and how far things of this kind) should be either allowed or prohibited.

93 (94).

Trajan to Pliny.

As to the Amiseni, whose petition you have appended to your letter: if by their laws (which they enjoy in virtue of their confederation with us) it is permitted them to have charitable collections, we cannot prevent their doing so: and all the less, if they employ contributions of this kind, not in assembling crowds and illegal gatherings, but in aiding the needs of the indigent. In the other cities which are bound by our laws, things of this kind must be prohibited.

94 (95).

To Trajan.

Suetonius Tranquillus, sir, is a most upright, honourable, and learned man. Having long been attracted by his character and studious pursuits, I have admitted him to my intimacy, and the more closely I have observed him, the more have I begun to cherish him. The rights enjoyed by those who have three children * are rendered a necessity to him for two reasons. His deserts often obtain for him a mention in his friends' wills, and at the same time his marriage has not turned out fruitful.† It is from your bounty that he must obtain, through my intercession, what the malignity of Fortune has refused him. I know, sir, how great is the favour which I ask. But it is of you that I am asking it, you whose indulgence

* See ii. 13.

† By the Lex Papia Poppæa, married persons, without children, were incapable of taking bequests in their entirety, a portion going, as we should term it, "to the Crown."

I experience in all my requests. You may, moreover, gather how ardent must be my desire in a matter which I should not ask you for, when absent from you, if that desire were merely of an ordinary character.

95 (96).

Trajan to Pliny.

How sparing I am in bestowing such favours as these you must certainly remember, my dearest Secundus, seeing that I often declare in the Senate itself that I have not gone beyond the number of favoured persons which, in the presence of that illustrious assembly, I promised should suffice me. However, I have subscribed to your wishes, and have ordered it to be entered on my registers, that I have accorded to Suetonius Tranquillus the rights of those who have three children, on the usual conditions.

96 (97).

To Trajan.

It is with me, sir, an established custom to refer to you all matters on which I am in doubt. Who, indeed, is better able, either to direct my scruples or to instruct my ignorance?

I have never been present at trials of Christians, and consequently do not know for what reasons, or how far, punishment is usually inflicted or inquiry made in their case. Nor have my hesitations been slight: as to whether any distinction of age should be made, or persons however tender in years should be viewed as differing in no respect from the full-grown: whether pardon should be accorded to repentance, or he who has once been a Christian should gain nothing by having ceased to be one: whether the very profession itself if unattended by crime, or else the crimes necessarily attaching to the profession, should be made the subject of punishment.

Meanwhile, in the case of those who have been brought before me in the character of Christians, my course has been as follows:—I put it to themselves whether they were or were not Christians. To such as professed that they were I put the inquiry a second and a third time, them with the supreme penalty. Those who persisted, I ordered to execution. For, indeed, I could not doubt, whatever might be the nature of that which they professed, that their pertinacity, at any rate, and inflexible obstinacy, ought to be punished. There were others afflicted with like madness, with regard to whom, as they were Roman citizens, I made a memorandum that they were to be sent for judgment to Rome. Soon, the very handling of this matter causing, as often happens, the area of the charge to spread, many fresh examples occurred. An anonymous paper was put forth containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they either were or had been Christians, upon their calling on the gods after me, and upon their offering wine and incense before your statue, which for this purpose I had ordered to be introduced in company with the images of the gods, moreover upon their reviling Christ—none of which things it is said can such as are really and truly Christians be compelled to do—these I deemed it proper to dismiss. Others named by the informer admitted that they were Christians, and then shortly afterwards denied it, adding that they had been Christians, but had ceased to be so, some three years, some many years, more than one of them as much as twenty years, before. All these, too, not only honoured your image and the effigies of the gods, but also reviled Christ. They affirmed, however, that this had been the sum, whether of their crime or their delusion; they had been in the habit of meeting together on a stated day, before sunrise, and of offering in turns a form of invocation to Christ, as to a god; also of binding themselves by an oath, *not* for any guilty purpose, but not to commit thefts, or robberies, or adulteries, not

to break their word, not to repudiate deposits when called upon; these ceremonies having been gone through, they had been in the habit of separating, and again meeting together for the purpose of taking food—food, that is, of an ordinary and innocent kind. They had, however, ceased from doing even this, after my edict, in which, following your orders, I had forbidden the existence of Fraternities. This made me think it all the more necessary to inquire, even by torture, of two maid-servants, who were styled deaconesses, what the truth was. I could discover nothing else than a vicious and extravagant superstition: consequently, having adjourned the inquiry, I have had recourse to your counsels. Indeed, the matter seemed to me a proper one for consultation, chiefly on account of the number of persons imperilled. For many of all ages and all ranks, ay, and of both sexes, are being called, and will be called, into danger. Nor are cities only permeated by the contagion of this superstition, but villages and country parts as well; yet it seems possible to stop it and cure it. It is in truth sufficiently evident that the temples, which were almost entirely deserted, have begun to be frequented, that the customary religious rites which had long been interrupted are being resumed, and that there is a sale for the food of sacrificial beasts, for which hitherto very few buyers indeed could be found. From all this it is easy to form an opinion as to the great number of persons who may be reclaimed, if only room be granted for penitence.

97 (98).

Trajan to Pliny.

You have followed the right mode of procedure, my dear Secundus, in investigating the cases of those who had been brought before you as Christians. For, indeed, it is not possible to establish any universal rule, possessing as it were a fixed form. These people should not be

searched for; if they are informed against and convicted they should be punished; yet, so that he who shall deny being a Christian, and shall make this plain in action, that is by worshipping our gods, even though suspected on account of his past conduct, shall obtain pardon by his penitence. Anonymous informations, however, ought not to be allowed a standing in any kind of charge; a course which would not only form the worst of precedents, but which is not in accordance with the spirit of our time.

98 (99).

To Trajan.

The city of Amastris, sir, which is handsome and tastefully built, possesses among its finest constructions a very beautiful and at the same time very long boulevard, all along one side of which runs what indeed is called a river, but is in reality a very foul sewer, hideous with its filthy aspect, and equally pestilent from its disgusting odour. For this reason it is a concern of salubrity no less than of appearance, that it should be covered up. This shall be done, with your permission, on our undertaking that money too shall not be wanting for the execution of a work as important as it is necessary.

99 (100).

Trajan to Pliny.

It stands to reason, my dearest Secundus, that the water in question which flows through the city of Amastris should be covered up, if in its uncovered state it is injurious to health. As to money not failing for the work, that I am confident you will see to with your customary diligence.

100 (101).

To Trajan.

We have acquitted ourselves, sir, with joy and alacrity of the vows offered up last year, and have taken on ourselves fresh ones, troops and provincials vying with each other in loyal affection. We have prayed the gods to preserve you and the commonwealth in prosperity and safety, with all the favour which—in addition to your other great and numerous virtues—you have merited by your exemplary piety, submission, and godliness.

101 (102).

Trajan to Pliny.

I have been pleased to learn from your letter, my dearest Secundus, that troops and provincials have, with most cheerful consent, acquitted themselves of their vows for my safety to the immortal gods, yourself leading the way, and that they have offered fresh vows for the future.

102 (103).

To Trajan.

We have celebrated, with due rites, the day on which the guardianship of the human race was transferred to you, by a most happy succession; commending to the gods, the ordainers of your rule, our public vows and our joys.

103 (104).

Trajan to Pliny.

I have been pleased to learn from your letter that the day of my accession has been celebrated with due

joyfulness and religious rites by the troops and provincials, yourself leading the way.

104 (105).

To Trajan.

Valerius Paulinus, sir, has bequeathed to me the patronage of his freedmen, to the exclusion of Paulinus. Of these, I pray you to grant the Roman citizenship to three for the present; for I fear it would be exceeding the bounds to invoke your favour on behalf of all of them at the same time; a favour which it behoves me to be all the more modest in availing myself of, in proportion to the great fulness in which I experience it. These, however, for whom I am applying are, C. Valerius Astræus, C. Valerius Dionysius, and C. Valerius Axer.

105 (106).

Trajan to Pliny.

It is most generous on your part to seek the speedy advantage, through my agency, of those who have been confided to your honour by Valerius Paulinus; accordingly, I have ordered an entry to be made in my registers to the effect that I have granted the Roman citizenship to those, for the present, for whom you have now asked it; and will do the same for others on behalf of whom you shall hereafter ask it.

106 (107).

To Trajan.

Having been requested, sir, by P. Accius Aquila, a centurion of the Sixth Cavalry Cohort,* to forward you

* *i.e.*, a mixed cohort of cavalry and infantry.

a memorial, in which he implores your favourable consideration of his daughter's status, I thought it hard to refuse him, knowing as I do the great patience and kindliness which you exhibit towards the prayers of soldiers.

107 (108).

Trajan to Pliny.

I have read the memorial of P. Accius Aquila, a centurion in the Sixth Cavalry Cohort, which you forwarded to me, and, moved by his prayers, I have granted the Roman citizenship to his daughter. I have forwarded to you a certificate of the rescript,* for you to hand to him.

108 (109).

To Trajan.

I should be obliged, sir, by your writing me word as to the rights you would wish the cities of Bithynia and Pontus to enjoy, in respect to calling in moneys owing to them either in the shape of rent, or for sales of property, or for any other reason. For my part, I have found that a preference over other creditors has been accorded them by most of the proconsuls, and has obtained the force of law. I am of opinion, however, that some rule should be established, and ratified by your wisdom, of a kind to conduce to their permanent interests. For as for what has been instituted by others, wise as such grants may have been, yet they are but temporary, and wanting in stability, unless they should enjoy the advantage of your authorisation.

* *Libellum rescripti* must correspond here to our "certificate of naturalisation."

109 (110).

Trajan to Pliny.

As to the rights which the cities of Bithynia and Pontus should enjoy in the matter of moneys which shall be owing, on any account, to the commonwealth, this must be looked to, according to the laws of each city. For in case it possesses a privilege in virtue of which it is preferred to the remaining creditors, then that privilege must be observed; in case it does not possess it, it will not be proper that it should be granted by me, to the detriment of private individuals.

110 (111).

To Trajan.

The Syndic of the city of Amisus, sir, has sued Julius Piso before me for a sum of about forty thousand denarii,* a public grant made to him twenty years ago, with the consent of the Senate and assembled Commons: citing your ordinances by which donations of this kind are forbidden. Piso, in reply, said that he had contributed large sums, and, indeed, spent nearly the whole of his means, on behalf of the commonwealth. He pleaded further the lapse of time, and begged that he might not be forced to give back, to the ruin of his remaining fortunes, that which he had received in return for many services, and a long while ago. Upon this I have thought it right to adjourn the whole case, in order to consult you, sir, as to the course you would have pursued.

111 (112).

Trajan to Pliny.

Although my ordinances forbid the making of largesses on public account, yet, to prevent the security of many

* The denarius was worth about 8½d.

persons from being undermined, when these have been made some time ago, it is not expedient that they should be reconsidered and their invalidity established. Whatever, then, shall have been done not less than twenty years before, in this case, must be passed over. For I desire to have regard for the individuals of each place, no less than the public moneys.

112 (113).

To Trajan.

By the law of Pompey, sir, by which the inhabitants of Bithynia and Pontus are governed, such persons as are chosen into the council by the censors are not ordered to pay any fee. Those, however, whom your favour has permitted certain of the cities to add over and above the lawful number, have contributed sometimes a thousand, sometimes two thousand, denarii apiece.* Upon this, the proconsul, Anicius Maximus, ordered such likewise as were chosen by the censors (that is to say, in a small number of cities) to pay fees of various amounts. It remains for you yourself to consider whether in all the cities all persons who shall hereafter be chosen councillors ought not to pay some fixed sum as an entrance fee; for it becomes you to make a permanent settlement, whose words and deeds immortality awaits.

113 (114).

Trajan to Pliny.

It is impossible for me to lay down a general rule as to whether all persons who in every city of Bithynia are created councillors† should, or should not, furnish an honorarium on their admission to the councilship. I

* About £35 to £70.

† *Decuriones*, as in Bk. I. Letter 8. The ending of this letter is imperfect and corrupt.

think, then—and this is always the safest course—that the law of each city should be followed. . . .

114 (115).

To Trajan.

By the law of Pompey, sir, it is permitted to the cities of Bithynia to enroll among their citizens any persons they please, provided they are not of any of the other cities in Bithynia. In the same law are enacted the grounds on which persons may be ejected from the Senate by the censors. Upon this, certain of the censors thought it right to consult me as to whether they ought to eject one who was from another city. Inasmuch as the law, though forbidding the enrolment of one from another city, yet did not order that this should be a ground of ejection from the Senate; moreover, since I was assured that in every city there were a number of councillors from other cities, and that much disturbance would be caused to many individuals and to many cities, . . . that part of the law which had long since become obsolete through a kind of general consent, . . . I have thought it necessary to consult you as to what you would have observed. I have appended to this letter the principal clauses of the law.

115 (116).

Trajan to Pliny.

No wonder you were in doubt, dearest Secundus, as to the proper reply for you to make to the censors who consulted you. . . . For the authority of the law on the one hand, and, on the other, the long usage which has obtained in opposition to the law, might well move you in opposite directions. I have decided upon thus compromising the matter: that we make no change in what is past, but that the citizens who have been naturalised, though illegally, of

whatever city they be, shall remain where they are; for the future, however, that Pompey's law be observed. If we were for maintaining its provisions retrospectively as well, much disturbance would necessarily follow.

116 (117).

To Trajan.

Persons who attain their majority, or contract a marriage, or enter on a public office, or inaugurate a public work, are in the habit of inviting the whole of the council, and even a considerable number of the population, and presenting them with a couple of denarii,* and sometimes one, per man. I should be obliged by your writing me word whether you think these celebrations should be permitted, and if so, how far. For my part, although I am of opinion that the right to issue invitations should be conceded, especially on solemn occasions, yet at the same time I fear that those who invite a thousand individuals, and sometimes even more, may seem to exceed the bounds, and to fall into an appearance of distributing largesses.

117 (118).

Trajan to Pliny.

No wonder you are afraid that an invitation "should fall into an appearance of distributing largesses," which not only exceeds the bounds in point of numbers, but also collects together to a ceremonious dole people in bands, so to speak, not man by man, each one on grounds of personal acquaintance. But I have made choice of your intelligence on this very account, that in forming the manners of that province of yours you should yourself ordain and establish what may be of advantage to the permanent quiet of the province.

* The denarius was worth about eightpence-halfpenny.

118 (119).

To Trajan.

The athletes, sir, consider that the rewards which you have established in the case of the Iselastic * contests are owing to them from the very day on which they were crowned; for they say it is not at all material at what time they made their public entry into their native place, but at what time they were victors in the contest, by reason of which they were empowered to make such entry. I, on the other hand, observe that they have been given under the name of "Iselastic;" and this makes me strongly inclined to doubt whether it be not rather the time of their making their public entry which must be looked at.

These same persons ask for pensions in the case of a contest, which has been made an Iselastic one by you, though they should have been victors before it was so made. For they say it is only consistent that just as this money is not given them for those contests which have ceased to be Iselastic after their victory, so it should be given to them for those which have begun to be Iselastic after their victory. Here, too, I am in no small doubt whether one can take account of what is past, and whether anything should be given them which was not owing to them at the time when they were victors. I pray you, then, to deign to determine my doubts, that is to say, to interpret your own benefactions.

119 (120).

Trajan to Pliny.

The Iselastic rewards ought, it seems to me, to begin

* Contests in public games, the victor in which was entitled to make a public entry into his city, from εἰσελαύνω, to enter, drive in.

from the time when a man has made his personal entry into his own city. Pensions for those contests which I have been pleased to make Iselastic, in case they were not Iselastic before, are not due retrospectively. Nor can it avail in view of the athletes' request, that they ceased to receive these monies for those contests which subsequently to their victory I decided should not be Iselastic. For though the character of these contests was changed, nevertheless what these people had previously received is not asked for back again.

120 (121).

To Trajan.

Up to this time, sir, I have never accommodated anybody with a passport, or issued one for any other service than your own. A kind of necessity has broken through this constant practice of mine. For my wife having heard of the death of her grandfather, and being desirous of setting off to her aunt's, I thought it hard to deny her the use of a passport, seeing that the whole grace of such an attention consisted in its expedition, and that I knew I could give good reason for a journey the motive of which was family affection. This I have written to you, because it seemed to me that I should be deficient in gratitude if I concealed the fact of my being indebted to your kindness, among other favours, for this one. I mean, that my confidence in your kindness has caused me not to hesitate in doing, without consulting you, what if I had consulted you, would have been done too late.

121 (122).

Trajan to Pliny.

You were right, dearest Secundus, in being confident in my intentions. Nor could you hesitate to do what would

have been done too late if you had consulted me as to whether your wife's journey should be aided by passports such as I have authorised you to issue, particularly as your wife was bound, in the case of her aunt, to enhance the grace of her arrival by her expedition.

THE END

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Plinius Caecilius Secundus, C
The letters of the younger
Pliny

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